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BAPTISM:

ITS

NATURE, OBLIGATION, MODE, SUBJECTS, AND BENEFITS.

BY

L. ROSSER, A.M.
OF THE VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

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PREFACE.

THE fruitful causes of division in the Christian Church originate in the disposition of weak and selfish man to increase or lessen, modify or do away, the conditions and requisitions of salvation, positively enjoined or plainly implied in the Bible. Out of the old Jewish vail, rent from top to bottom by Christ himself, some fragment is often reserved, and devoted to sectarian purposes. The middle wall of partition, long since broken down, is rebuilt upon the very authority by which it was overthrown, and to secure the very ends which its prostration was designed to prevent. The pure fire of heavenly love, kindled by Christ to burn for ever on the altar of his sanctuary, struggles amid the impure vapours of religious contention, till often it finally expires, and in its place flashes up the sickly light of sectarian fervor—a strange fire, destructive alike to the church and the world—the cause of grief and reproach to the one, and of contempt and triumph to the other. In vain may the church weep over her fallen altars, broken harps, rent robes—her failures, misfortunes, and frequent defeats—her want of spiritual influence—her sad declensions in charity, in zeal, in spiritual life, in

pious activity, and the spirit of unity:—she weeps over her own work—she furnishes both the occasions and weapons of attack—she invites the insult offered to her majesty, purity, and gentleness—she is the cause of her own misfortunes—the mournful victim of her own arrogance and imprudence.

How much of uncharitableness might be prevented, and how extensively the spirit of Christian fellowship might be promoted, in the various branches of orthodox Christianity, by practically observing the invariable truth, that *the unity of the church, in all ages, depends upon the identity of the doctrines and conditions of salvation, and unity of love, and not upon a mere uniformity in ceremony, practice, and opinion*, which, from time to time, may be adopted, and which are as mutable as the manners and customs of men! The "Act of Uniformity," passed in England, in 1661–2, obliging all the clergy to subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles, and use the same forms of worship, caused upward of two thousand ministers to quit the Church of England—which was indeed a usurpation of power over man's religious nature, and a violation of the spirit of the gospel; and yet these very ministers regarded their own regulations, and differences of opinion in religious matters, as just causes of divisions among themselves, and exclusiveness toward each other—an example, alas, lamentable in its influence in our own country! If our Christian principles and experience are founded on the sweet, simple, and gentle laws of the gospel, framed as they are by infinite wisdom, universal in their sanction, boundless in the range of their blessings, written in the blood of their meek and

compassionate Author, and designed to unite mankind in the bonds of peace on earth, preparatory to communion in heaven, why should we regard, with scrupulous tenacity, mere difference in external rites and ceremonies as an insurmountable barrier to unity and fellowship on earth? Can we not be in spirit on earth what we shall be in heaven? Are not those principles which are sufficient to secure eternal salvation in heaven, sufficient to secure a catholic spirit and communion of saints on earth? If we believe they are not, then let us never offer up a prayer again on the principle contained in the admirable form of prayer prescribed by our Saviour—"Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." Are not the same principles which were able to preserve the church in the bonds of peace and the unity of the spirit, in the days of Christ and his apostles, sufficient to preserve the church in the same unity and communion, in all ages of time? What other means to protect, or what other chart to guide, do we need, in addition to those which the apostolic church possessed? Do not union, prosperity, and stability depend upon the same great fundamental principles and necessary things now, as then were required? We say *necessary*—from which man can no more take any part, and to which he can no more add any thing, than he can affect the necessary being of God himself.

It is surprising and affecting, that any difference of opinion ever should have arisen in the church on the subject of Baptism; and yet there never was a subject, respecting which so great a diversity of opinion has unnecessarily existed among pious men as that of Bap-

tism—a diversity of opinion that has been productive of nothing but *injury* to the church. Some consider it invested with indispensable importance, others with no importance—some place all the importance in the mode and subjects, and none in the thing signified—some consider it a Jewish prejudice or pagan superstition, while others solemnly regard it as a Christian ordinance or sacrament, and place all the importance in the subjects and signification, and none in the mode. Regarding the mode as non-essential, and the subjects and signification only as important, with an humble confidence in Divine Providence, we commit the following volume to its destiny.

FREDERICKSBURG, March 17th, 1853.

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BAPTISM.

Introduction.

PREPARATORY to the consideration of Baptism, it is important that we give a brief explanation of the nature of the Sacraments.

The essential characteristics of a sacrament are six in number, namely: it must be divine in its institution, significative in its meaning, appropriate in its nature, connected with the church, universal in its application,* and obligatory till repealed. A rite having these marks, designated by God, properly becomes the formal sensible seal of the covenant of salvation under any dispensation of divine grace. And thus a sacrament may be placed in natural things, by which, in a moral sense, they become different from what they were in a natural sense—their natural character being in no respect changed—only a moral sense is superadded. For example, the tree of life was a pledge of immortality to Adam while he observed faithfully the divine law—not that the tree was invested with the elements of incorruption, by which immortality could be secured to Adam, but because

* That is, not inconsistent with climate, sickness, age, or any laws of nature, or circumstances of divine providence.

it was designated by God as the seal of his covenant. And so, the "bow set in the cloud" is a sign to man that there shall "no more be a flood to destroy the earth"—not that the rainbow possesses any philosophical efficacy to prevent a second deluge, but that it has been selected by God as the most prominent, impressive, sensible seal of his covenant with Noah and his posterity—a natural phenomenon conspicuous upon the retreat of the storm, as the encouraging sign that God is ever mindful of his covenant. The rainbow is the same now that it was when it spanned the heavens before the flood; it never can have any thing added to its natural state, unless natural laws be modified; but as a sign appointed by God, it possesses a value which it never had before the deluge. For the same reason, silver coin stamped with a public impression acquires a new valuation, though it is changed in no respect in its natural state. Calvin observes, "Even from the beginning of the world, whenever God gave to the holy fathers any sign, it is well known to have been inseparably connected with some doctrine, without which our senses would only be astonished with the mere view of it."[1] Thus all the sensible signs of the Jewish economy were connected severally with some prominent doctrine, either to be believed or practised. And so Baptism is connected with all the prominent doctrines of the Christian dispensation, and, as an outward seal, instituted and enjoined by God, it is invested with all the meaning and authority of a seal in its common acceptation. Again, Calvin defines a sacrament to be "an assistance and support of faith—an outward sign by which the Lord seals in our consciences the promises of his good-will toward us, to support the weakness of our faith; and we on our part testify our piety to him, in his presence, and that of angels, as well as before men."

[1] Insts. b. iv. c. xiv. sec. 4.

After the same form is the definition of a sacrament given in our Discipline: "Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good-will toward us, by the which he doth invisibly work in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him."[2]

The explanation of the origin of that undue importance which is attached to the sacraments by certain sects, is to be found in the manner adopted by the ancient Fathers, in translating the original Greek of the New Testament into the Latin language. Thus, the Greek word *μυστήριον*, *mysterion*, wherever it refers to divine things, the Fathers rendered by the word *sacramentum*, and not *arcanum*, lest they should seem to degrade the dignity of the subject. In process of time, the term *sacramentum*, which was originally only a sign of spiritual things, came to be applied as an indispensable means and condition of spiritual things. *Sacramentum* was confounded with *mysterion*—the sacrament was identified with the mystery—that is, in the sacrament the mystery was supposed to be hid or concealed; so that he who did not submit himself to the sacrament, it was concluded, could never understand the mystery of spiritual things—never experience regenerating grace. By referring to the Latin translation of the following scriptures, the origin of this confusion may be discovered: "Having made known to us the mystery—*mysterion*—of his will;"[3] *mysterion* is translated *sacramentum*. "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward; how that by revelation he made known unto me the—*mysterion*—mystery," translated *sacramentum*.[4] "The *mysterion*—mystery, which he had hid from ages," trans-

[2] Dis. art. xvi. [3] Eph. i. 9. [4] Eph. iii. 3.

lated *sacramentum*.[5] On the other hand, the Latins so effectually confounded the meaning of *sacramentum* with that of *mysterion*, that the Greeks themselves denominated the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper *mysteries*, according to their idea of the proper sense of *mysterion*. To this misapplication of the term sacramentum, is to be ascribed the pernicious error of baptismal regeneration. Moreover, as man is composed of *sense* and *spirit*, Christ has wisely adapted the sacraments to his complex nature; for the sacraments are sensible symbols, not only of invisible spiritual communion with God, but of spiritual communion and fellowship with saints. Failing to discriminate between the outward sensible character of Baptism and its inward spiritual meaning, either too much or too little importance has been given to baptism. As extremes are found in individual characters, so extremes are often found in individual churches. On the subject of baptism, the Baptist church has taken one extreme, namely, a *specific mode*, while the Romish church, the Church of England, the Puseyites, and the Campbellites, have taken the other extreme, namely, *spiritual purification* or *regeneration*. The ideas of mode and purification, it is true, are both contained in baptism, the former necessarily, and the latter symbolically; but the Baptists err in restricting mode exclusively to immersion, and the Romish church and its offshoots, in sinking the *ceremonial, emblematical* sense of baptism into the spiritual, and in investing the rite with a spiritual energy to destroy sin and communicate the Holy Spirit.

After a careful examination of standard authorities, we have been enabled to present to the general reader the following analysis of opinion on the subject of baptismal regeneration. The Romish church, at an early age, arrogantly

[5] Col. i. 27.

assumed that baptism, *ex opere operato*, from the work wrought or performance of the act, in all cases, *non ponentibus obicem mortalis peccati*, who do not oppose the obstacle of mortal sin, confers regenerating grace. On the other hand, many continental Reformers assumed that baptism was a *mere sign, merum signum.* In the Church of England arose several parties, namely, those who maintain that "elect infants" only are regenerated in baptism; those who maintain that those infants only are regenerated in whom "future repentance and faith are foreseen by God;" those who maintain that those infants only are regenerated in whom "a *seed*, or *principle*, or *habit*, or *spiritual bias* is implanted in the heart;" those who maintain that those infants only are regenerated in baptism, "one of whose parents (really or at any rate nominally) is believing;" those who maintain that those infants only are regenerated whose "parents make vicarious pledges at the time of baptism;" those who maintain "that the full baptismal blessing is not conferred in any case of infant baptism, but a proportionate influence only is bestowed;" those who maintain—the High-Church party in the Church of England, the Tractarian or Puseyite party, the school of Laud and Montague in the latter part of the reign of James I., and the High-Church party in America—that regeneration *universally* accompanies baptism.

The original compilers of the Baptismal Services in the Church of England were Calvinists; and hence, the dogma of baptismal regeneration in the case of "elect infants" was adopted. The Tractarian party, or High-Church in England and America, interpret the Baptismal Services as the Romish church does. All these parties may be classed under two general divisions: first, those who maintain that God, in the case of *all* infants, has positively tied or connected spiritual regeneration with baptism, and in all cases of adult baptism, in which no impediment of mortal sin is placed in

the way, spiritual regeneration is conferred—this is the first class. The second class maintain that regeneration is not so tied or connected with baptism, either in the case of the infant or the adult, but depends upon the conditions which we have mentioned. And yet both classes agree in one thing, which is, that spiritual regeneration, in the case of both infant and adult, is conferred in baptism—they differ only in opinion as to the *extent* of the blessing, and the *conditions* upon which it is bestowed. It is easy to see how these errors all originated in confounding, as we have already stated, the thing signified with the sacramental sign and seal.

There was, among the old Reformers and in the Church of England, another party, who maintained what we regard the proper view of baptism; and this view is still maintained by the Low-Church in England and America, and by other Protestant churches. It will be the object of the first part of this work to show, that baptism is enjoined in the Scriptures merely as a sacrament, in the sense we have defined, and that no specific mode is enjoined in its religious usage.

In order to see the appropriateness of the meaning we propose to give farther to baptism, it is necessary to consider for a moment the history of the gradual development of the plan of redemption. As soon as Adam violated the law of works under which he had been placed in original perfection, God was under legal necessity, either at once to inflict the threatened and destructive penalty incurred, or in mercy to provide a proper and just method of recovery. Such a method was the plan of redemption, through the sacrifice of the Son of God. The full development of this method is to be gradually made by many introductory measures, as in the revolutions of time the necessities of man shall require.

A few centuries after the fall of man, in the application of measures to instruct and reform the posterity of Adam,

the corrupt and incorrigible world is overwhelmed in the Deluge. Soon after the Deluge, the descendants of Noah desire to establish a permanent association that shall ultimately embrace the whole earth, which, should they succeed, must render the contagion of moral corruption the more rapid in its diffusion, and the force of wicked example the more energetic and obstinate in its results. To prevent these consequences, language is confounded and the human race is dispersed over the earth. Soon after this dispersion, idolatry becomes the general sin; and to check this evil, Abraham is called, the worship of the true God set up, the Mosaic dispensation introduced, and a peculiar people, the Jews, are hereby preserved from the general sin; and hence, in part, we have the explanation of the design of circumcision under the Jewish dispensation. But the Jewish dispensation—designed to preserve the worship of the true God and to prepare the world for the coming of Christ—being insufficient to reform the human race, Christ, the promised Messiah, at length appears, and, in his incarnation, life, and death he develops, consummates, and publishes to the world the great principles of the plan of redemption under the form of the Christian dispensation. The Christian dispensation is spiritual and final—all others, in one form or other, to a great extent were sensible and preparatory. Hence, the Christian dispensation is called the dispensation of the *Spirit.*

But how is man to be formally initiated into the church under the Christian dispensation? By baptism. And why by baptism? Because, first, the services of the Christian dispensation are pure and spiritual; secondly, because the Sacrifice upon which it is founded is holy and spiritual; thirdly, because the agent, the Holy Spirit, that applies that sacrifice, is pure and spiritual; fourthly, because the condition of salvation is faith, pure and spiritual; fifthly, because the effects that follow in the heart and life of the believer

are pure and holy: in a word, because the Christian dispensation contains all the spiritual blessings and doctrines requisite for the recovery and salvation of man—all of which water baptism, as a sign and seal, sets forth and expresses more significantly than any thing else can do. And thus the baptism of water is divinely instituted as the proper initiatory sacrament of the Covenant of Grace under the Christian dispensation.

Hence the propriety of John's baptism, as preparatory to a profession of Christianity. "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him who should come, that is, on Christ Jesus"[6]—the Founder of the Christian dispensation of the grace of God. The Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians—one of the first churches founded under the Christian dispensation—thus unfolds the nature of baptism: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ."[7] That is, By baptism ye have been formally initiated into the church under the Christian dispensation, and thus publicly ye have made a profession of Christianity in contradistinction to Judaism. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."[8] And so Peter, on the day of Pentecost, urges the Jews to "repent," and be "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus:"[9] that is, Renounce your sins, relinquish your Jewish prejudices, believe in Christ, and be initiated by baptism into the Christian church. Such is the general nature of baptism; but as it embraces many important particulars, we shall proceed, without further delay, to the special consideration of the subject of this treatise.

[6] Acts xix. 4. [7] Gal. iii. 27, 28 [8] Gal. iii. 29. [9] Acts ii. 38.

PART I.

Nature and Obligation of Baptism.

CHAPTER I.

NATURE AND OBLIGATION OF BAPTISM.

Water baptism is the outward sign of the inward seal to all the covenanted mercies of God, embraced in the atonement of Christ, under the Christian dispensation, whether obtained conditionally or unconditionally—conditionally as it respects adults, and unconditionally as it respects infants. Thus, it becomes the means of formal initiation into the church, under the Christian dispensation. It embraces also, a solemn, public, and practical profession of Christianity, and hence, it is essentially designed to distinguish the church from the world.

As the initiatory sacrament of the Christian dispensation, it implies faith in all the doctrines which it contains, obedience to all the precepts which it enjoins, the discharge of all the duties which it imposes, and a title to all the blessings which it promises: it relates to our faith, to our practice, to our hopes, to our obligations, and to God's faithfulness.

1. *It solemnly and publicly expresses our faith in the Trinity.* "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[1]

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19.

2. *It is expressive of our adoption into the family of God.* "For ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus; and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."[2]

3. *It is expressive of spiritual union with the Son.* "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."[3]

4. *It is expressive of regeneration by the Spirit.* "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."[4] Baptism

[2] Gal. iii. 26–29. [3] Rom. vi. 3–11. [4] John iii. 5–7.

is emblematical of that inward, spiritual change, which is of the operation of the Holy Spirit, and hence baptism cannot be sustained as any part of the condition of the new birth. That is, the sacrament of baptism cannot be the condition of that which it signifies as already existing. If baptism is the condition of regeneration, then faith is not; if faith is the condition of this change, then baptism is not; or if both faith and baptism are the condition, then baptism loses its significative character, since it cannot properly signify that of which it is the essential condition.

Baptism, therefore, in the above text, is to be regarded as emblematical, and not conditional, of the new birth.

5. *It is expressive of renunciation of the world.* It is designed to remind us, through all subsequent life, of the sacred vows and obligations assumed in baptism. Thus, the Apostle Paul, in writing to the churches at Rome, Corinth, and Colosse, refers to their baptism for this purpose. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."[5] It is to be lamented, that the sacraments have so little influence on our lives.

6. *It is the visible expression of spiritual union among Christians.* "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism."[6] An

[5] Rom vi. 3–5.

[6] Eph. iv. 1–5.

indispensable characteristic of baptism is, that it connects with the church. The design of the sacraments is "to keep Christ's worshippers and servants in one faith, and in the confession of the same." "For," to use the language of Augustine, "men cannot be united in the profession of religion, whether true or false, unless they are connected by some communion of visible signs or sacraments."[7] And again, "Baptism also serves for our confession before men. For it is a mark by which we openly profess our desire to be numbered among the people of God, by which we testify our agreement with all Christians in the worship of one God, and in one religion, and by which we make a public declaration of our faith."[8]

7. *It is expressive of hope of a future and triumphant resurrection.* "Buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."[9] "Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"[10]

Finally—*It sets forth the doctrine of original sin.* "The corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually,"[11] is clearly and solemnly taught in infant baptism. Reference to the propriety of infant baptism on the ground of the original corruption of man, furnished Augustine with an irresistible argument against Pelagius. As it sets forth the doctrine of original

[7] Calvin's Inst. b. iv. c. xiv. sec. 19. [8] Calvin's Inst. b. iv. c. xv. sec. 13.
[9] Rom. vi. 3–5. [10] 1 Cor. xv. 29. [11] See art. vii. of our Discipline.

sin, *it also sets forth the doctrine of free grace.* The doctrine of free grace is especially set forth in infant baptism, since infants have an unconditional title both to salvation and baptism according to the doctrine of grace before faith: in the case of infants, titles and claims are founded upon free grace alone. It may be added, that the whole creed of our church, with all the obligations of the gospel of Jesus Christ, is set forth in the offices of baptism as laid down in our ritual. No objection can be maintained against this service of the church, unless, in any instance, the creed of the church be proved to be inconsistent with the plain word of God.

We shall next consider the obligation to be baptized.

1. The obligation to be baptized is founded upon the command of Christ: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c.[12] This is positive and decisive.

2. Upon the practice of the apostles. The converts were baptized at Philippi,[13] at Corinth,[14] at Ephesus,[15] at Colosse,[16] throughout Asia Minor,[17] and at Rome.[18] And hence we may infer that all the converts in the other apostolic churches were also baptized. Thus, obligation to be baptized rests upon the highest authority in the universe. Those who have exercised saving faith, and have not been baptized in infancy, cannot neglect this obligation without incurring the displeasure of God. The sacrament of baptism is positive as well as moral, and voluntary neglect of it cannot be forgiven without hearty repentance before God. As baptism is the formal means by which the subject is consecrated to Christ, obligation to observe it extends no farther than the importance which is connected with the *formal, sensible* in-

[12] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[13] Acts xvi. 15–33.
[14] Acts xviii. 8; 1 Cor. i. 13; xv. 29.
[15] Acts iv. 5; xix. 5.
[16] Col. ii. 12.
[17] 1 Pet. iii. 21.
[18] Rom. vi. 3.

stitutes of Christianity; and neglect of baptism, as the neglect of the Lord's supper—the other sacrament of the Christian dispensation—has all the guilt which is connected with the neglect of any of the ordinances of religion. Baptism, in the case of adults, should be received at the earliest opportunity after the act of justifying faith has been exercised.

The question is often asked, Is baptism a matter of moral obligation? The specific nature of this question must first be determined. If the question have reference to a specific and invariable *mode*, or to any specific and particular *time*, the answer is, that these circumstances of baptism are immaterial and non-essential. But that the believer who has not been baptized is under moral obligation to be baptized according to some mode which he may prefer, and at the earliest suitable time, there can be no doubt. As baptism, in several of its essential features, however, is wholly *sensible*, its observance must depend upon concurrent circumstances of a *sensible* character; and so, under some circumstances, it may be postponed or omitted without guilt,[19]—as in the case of the penitent on the cross, and in any case where baptism is impracticable.

Note.—There is an important design connected with the institution of baptism, which must strike the attention of every careful reader with peculiar force. Embracing, as baptism does, the principles just considered, and being the initiating sacrament of the Christian church, it continues a standing proof to all ages of the divine origin of the Christian religion. The continued observance of rites and ceremonies through succeeding ages, presents the strongest evidence of the authenticity of their original institution. The

[19] It is unlike faith in these respects, which is purely a spiritual exercise, and hence is independent of outward circumstances, and so is of immediate, universal, and perpetual obligation.

passover, the feast of unleavened bread, and other institutions of the Jewish system, were standing proofs to the Jews of the divine origin of their religion. So baptism and the Lord's supper remain to this day, and will so remain to the end of time, as commanding evidences of the divine origin of the Christian religion. Their commemorative character, while it gives visibility to the Christian church, refers to the time, circumstances, and design of the original institution. Without the sacraments the church would soon be commingled with, and indistinguishable from the world. The Quakers, who reject the sacraments, give visibility to their society by peculiarities of dress, speech, and behavior. We little think, as Christians, how much we owe to the sacraments as evidences of the Christian religion, until the truth and authority of Christianity are assailed by the infidel and unbeliever. Especially does the humble believer find the formality of the church corroborative of its divine origin, although it may be barren and burdensome to him who has assumed it as the counterfeit of real piety.

CHAPTER II.

CIRCUMSTANCES ESSENTIAL TO THE VALIDITY OF BAPTISM.

HAVING considered the nature and obligation of baptism, we shall next consider what constitutes valid baptism. There are five elements essential to preserve it in harmony and connection with the plan of salvation, and to secure its validity as the initiatory sacrament of the church under the Christian dispensation,—namely, the proper administrator, the proper subjects, the proper form, the proper element, and any appropriate mode.

1. The proper administrator. The man converted yester-

day, and unbaptized to-day, is not the proper administrator. Nor is every converted man who has been baptized, though of splendid talents or exalted piety, a proper administrator. Neither conversion, nor baptism, nor talent, nor piety, singly or combined, can invest any one with the right to baptize.

The proper administrator is the man who has believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, been born again, called by the Holy Ghost to preach the gospel, and has been solemnly set apart by the church, according to its form of ordination, to dispense the word of God and to administer the holy sacraments.[1] And so Christ himself, in the great commission, invests the preacher only with the right to baptize: "Go ye into all the world, and *preach* the gospel to every creature, baptizing in the name," &c.

2. The proper form of baptism. Christ, the Founder of the Christian dispensation, has given the proper form of initiation into the church, under the Christian dispensation, in the following words:—"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And why was this form given? Because the three persons in the Trinity are engaged in the work of redemption. Why, then, was not this form of initiation into the church given at some earlier period of the world? Because the Son of God, one of the parties to the great scheme of salvation, had not yet been fully revealed to the world; and because, consequently, the Holy Spirit, another party, was under the necessity of delaying the full outpouring of his influences till the ground of his agency, the sacrifice of the Son, should be offered up and

[1] It is worthy of observation, that ordinarily the church is impressed with the presentiment that the candidate for orders is a proper person to receive them; even the world, sometimes, is impressed with the same belief: as if, it would seem, the Holy Spirit hereby prepares the church and the world with confidence in the man thus called to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments.

manifested to the world. No other form of initiation could correspond to the Christian dispensation, and consequently baptism is incomplete without this form.[2]

3. The proper subjects. Passing by infants for the present, it is universally conceded that the believer is a proper subject of baptism.

4. The proper element. The proper element is water. Water is proper from the purity of its nature and effects, and is emblematical of the purity and spirituality of the Christian dispensation; the purity of the Holy Ghost, the agent in conversion; the purity of the results of faith in conversion—namely, a pure nature, pure principles, pure motives, pure feelings, pure dispositions, holy relations and actions, with all the blessings, holy influences, and designs of the atonement of Christ provided for man under the Christian dispensation. This is the design of water in baptism—the whole design. To what other use can water be applied in the salvation of the soul? It cannot, in the least degree, supersede the efficacy of the blood of Christ, nor the agency of the Holy Spirit, nor the office and necessity of faith: it has a general, expressive, emblematical signification—this is all.

5. The proper mode. The administrator, the subjects, the form, and the element to be used in administering bap-

[2] Upon an examination of the practice of the ancient churches it will be found, in every case, that consecration to the Trinity is the import of baptism. And hence the apostles rebaptized the disciples of John, because they had not explicitly professed the Son and the Spirit in the baptism of John. Consecration to the Trinity is a primary and peculiar import of baptism. Nothing allusive to the *burial* of the subject, in earth or water, is designed. Nor can it have reference to the *death* of Christ, because it has reference solely to the *service* of Christ. The primary and peculiar import of the holy eucharist is the death of Christ, and hence it is not credible that baptism also should "show forth his death"—that two rites, and the only two rites of the Christian dispensation, should refer to the same thing.

tism are all defined and enjoined in the clearest manner, but not one word of specification and injunction respecting the mode of baptism can be found in the Bible. In the other parts of baptism as they stand related to each other, in order to secure the validity of its administration, we find all to be plain, rational, and harmonious; but here, as it respects the mode, the connection, at first view, at least, is not so easily apprehended. As we do not at once see clearly the connection of the mode with the other parts of baptism, and as no specific mode is explicitly enjoined in the Scriptures, we are to seek the best evidence to satisfy our minds on the subject. If the mode were clearly and specifically enjoined in the Bible, it would be solemnly and perpetually binding, however inconsistent it might appear to be with the other parts of baptism. But as it is not explicitly defined and enjoined, it must be a subject of *inference*. That is, the connection of the mode with the circumstances essential to constitute valid baptism must be either expressed or implied, direct or inferable. This connection is not directly expressed or enjoined in the Bible: therefore the connection is to be inferred, and that mode is to be preferred which best preserves this connection.

Before we refer to the sources of inference on this subject, it is to be observed, that they furnish nothing in the form of *command* respecting any mode. No one can urge any thing to be a duty by *command*, which can only be made out to be a duty by *inference*. Much less can any one urge that to be a duty upon others, which is made out merely by *his* inference. My own inference may bind my conscience, but it can be obligatory upon no one else, unless he infer as I do. If, therefore, I believe or infer from the sources about to be adduced, that immersion is not the most proper mode of baptism, I cannot consider my inference as binding on any one else, unless he think with me. Respecting the

doctrine of inference, every one is left to his own judgment, and consequently, one with the Bible, and all the information he can get, spread out before him, has just as much right to infer that sprinkling and pouring are valid modes, as another has that immersion is a valid mode; and hence these modes may be regarded as equally binding on him, as immersion is on another who regards it as the only valid mode. In administering the ordinance of baptism, it is essential that water be used in some form, and if any *particular* and *invariable* mode of its use had been deemed *necessary* by Christ and his apostles, they would most clearly have specified it; but as they did not deem it material, they have left the whole matter to the inference of the church,—and we proceed now to the sources of light with which we are furnished on this subject.

PART II.

The Mode of Baptism.

CHAPTER I.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

THE sources of inference respecting the mode of baptism are six:—

1. The English Scriptures.
2. The original Greek word *βαπτιζω, baptizo.*
3. The original Greek prepositions.
4. The harmonious connection of the mode with the known circumstances of spiritual baptism, and the plan of salvation.
5. The circumstantial nature of the institutions of Christianity is left to the discretion of the church.
6. Collateral proofs.

1. The English Scriptures are the first source to which we apply for information respecting the mode of baptism. All Scripture, adduced in support of any favorite mode, *leads only to inference.* Take the case of immersion as an example. Thus, Christ "went up straightway out of the water"—and it is inferred that he came up from *under* the water. "Philip and the eunuch both went down into"—and it is inferred that the eunuch went down *under* "the water." "Buried with him by baptism into *death*"—and it is inferred that we are to be buried with Christ by bap-

tism into *water*. And so of all other passages of Scripture from which immersion is inferred. Now it is obvious, that all this is nothing but inference, for the words *under* and *water* are supplied by the imagination; and it is natural for the mind under moral influences, while in search of information to support favorite opinions, to strengthen doubtful evidences by light from the imagination, and thus incline to that mode which seems to be sustained by the strongest inferences from the Scriptures. But so far as immersion is concerned, it is not once used in the Bible, and consequently no inference from the abstract word can be made respecting the mode of baptism—unless the idea of immersion be drawn from the original word *βαπτιζω*,—and not even from this—as we shall see presently. But the very words, "sprinkling" and "pouring," are used repeatedly, expressly referring to the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which external baptism is intended to represent. If similar passages of Scripture, in which spiritual baptism is represented by immersion, could be produced, then inference for external baptism by immersion would be equally strong with inference for external baptism by sprinkling and pouring. For baptism by sprinkling and pouring, there is inference based on the very words, which is stronger than *mere conjecture;* for I do contend, that all immersionists *guess* at immersion, in all cases, in the Bible, as the scriptural mode of baptism. I put the question:—Do you *know* that Christ, or any one else mentioned in the Bible, was baptized by immersion? *Do you know it?* No, but you honestly infer it; and according to the grounds of your inference is the strength of your belief. But the belief of others in other modes is better supported, because based on stronger grounds, as we hope to show.

It is sometimes boldly asserted by the uninformed, who never read the Bible through, and who are imperfectly ac-

quainted with a few passages of Scripture from which immersion is inferred by them, "that sprinkling and pouring are not found in the Bible, while immersion is often found." This is the presumption of ignorance, and the dogmatism of prejudice. The reverse is true. Immersion, I repeat, is not once mentioned in the Bible. From all which we are brought to this general conclusion:

Because the mode of baptism is a subject of inference, and therefore arbitrary and discretionary with the responsible subject of baptism, we cannot say that sprinkling and pouring are the only proper modes, but because they are sustained, as we believe, by stronger inference than immersion, while we do not exclude immersion, they are to be preferred to immersion. That is, in a case like the present, one inference has not such pre-eminence over another that it should give the stronger the force of *express injunction*, to the exclusion of the weaker as unscriptural and invalid. The selection of the mode, therefore, is to be left with the candidate for baptism, capable of choosing, as in a thousand other instances he enjoys the liberty of selecting the mode.

Invested with this right of choice, different minds are differently and innocently persuaded. Take a supposed case of three candidates for baptism. The first comes and says, "I desire to be baptized by sprinkling." And why do you wish to be baptized by sprinkling? "Because I believe it is the scriptural mode." You believe it is the scriptural mode? "Yes, for I read, 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you,' &c.;[1] and as this refers to the inward baptism, I believe the external baptism should correspond as nearly as possible to the internal—and therefore I wish to be baptized by sprinkling." Very well, you shall be baptized by sprinkling.

[1] Ezek. xxxvi. 23; Isa. lii. 15.

The second candidate approaches and says, "But I wish to be baptized by pouring." And why do you wish to be baptized by pouring? "Because I believe it is the scriptural mode, for I read, 'I will *pour* out my spirit upon all flesh,'[2] and as this refers to spiritual baptism, I suppose the external mode of baptism ought to be analogous—and therefore I prefer baptism by pouring." Very well, you shall be baptized by pouring. But the third candidate is of a different opinion: "I desire," says he, "to be baptized by immersion." Why so? "Because I believe it is the scriptural mode." And why do you believe it is the scriptural mode? "Because, I read, Christ 'went up straightway out of the water;'[3] and, 'they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch;'[4] and so I infer Christ and the eunuch were immersed, and therefore I wish to be baptized by immersion." Very well, you shall be baptized by immersion. Each has his mode, founded on inference, and the wishes of each are to be respected by the proper administrator. That the two former, however, have a broader ground for inference than the third candidate, cannot be questioned for a moment, since they proceed under the force of the very words expressing the mode of spiritual baptism, which external baptism is intended to represent. All the light then from the English Scriptures, respecting the mode of baptism, is circumstantially and inferentially in favor of sprinkling and pouring.

2. The second source of information respecting the mode of baptism, to which we direct attention, is the original Greek word, *βαπτίζω, baptizo.*

First. We are not to determine the meaning of this word by the particles and appendages with which it is often found connected in Scripture. Common readers, who do not un-

[2] Joel ii. 28. [3] Matt. iii. 16. [4] Acts viii. 38.

derstand the primary meaning of this famous word, determine its signification by the particles and phrases thrown around it. But this is giving to the original word the meaning of its appendages; which is unfair, since the appendages have a distinct meaning in themselves, and consequently are to be examined disconnected from the original word. Let us remove these phrases, and consider them by themselves. The phrases, "went down into," "came up out of," "when he came up straightway out of," "in Jordan," "buried into death," and suchlike expressions are to be examined separately. Now, do these phrases mean immersion? Certainly not; and as a plain reader, unacquainted with the original word, you are left to the whole force of inference from these phrases. We offer you the following criticisms, to prove that the particles and appendages connected with this word had no reference to its meaning, but to the circumstances of its use, and therefore they can furnish no aid in determining the signification of *baptizo*.

In the case of the eunuch, the phrases "went down into," and "came up out of" had reference to the chariot and the manner of approaching and leaving the water, and not to the manner or mode of baptism. The words which are translated "went down into," and "came out of," are *καταβαίνω, katabaino*, and *αναβαίνω, anabaino*. That we may learn the meaning of these terms in the present instance, let us consider their meaning in other passages of Scripture. The multitude, while Christ was nailed to the cross, railed on him, and said—"If thou be the Son of God, *come down from*—*κατάβηθι, katabethi*—the cross."[5] On the morning of the resurrection of Christ, "the angel of the Lord *descended*—*καταβας, katabas*—from heaven," &c.[6] And Jesus straightway *coming up out of*—*ἀναβαίνων ἀπο, anabainon*

[5] Matt. xxvii. 40.

[6] Matt. xxviii. 2.

apo—the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove *descending*—*καταβαίνον, katabainon*—upon him."[7] "And Jesus *goeth up into*—*αναβαίνει, anabainei*—a mountain." "And the scribes which *came down*—*καταβάντες, katabantes*—from Jerusalem." "And Jesus *went up*—*ἀνεβη, anebe*—unto them into the ship"—where from? Why, right from the water—from the surface of the sea: certainly he did not go up from *under* the water, as the Baptists suppose the eunuch went up from the water into his chariot. "And as they *came down from*—*καταβαινόντων, katabainonton*—the mountain." "And he desired Philip that he *would come up*—*αναβαντα, anabanta*—and sit with him."[8] Thus, when Matthew says that Christ "came up straightway out of the water," and when Luke says that the eunuch "went down into the water," and "came up out of the water," we are not to suppose that these phrases involve the idea of immersion, or furnish us any satisfactory light respecting the *mode* of baptism, but only refer to the *fact* of baptism. In the case of Philip, we have already seen him go up into—*αναβαντα*, (verse 31,)—*the chariot*, and seat himself by the side of the eunuch. Presently (verse 38) we see Philip descending—*κατέβησαν*—from the chariot *to*—*εἰς, eis*—the water with the eunuch, to baptize him. Not one word in all this respecting the mode of baptizing. The phrases "down into," and "came up out of," or *from*, (as *ex, ek*, may be translated,) refer to Philip as much as to the eunuch, and describe their descent from the chariot to the water, and return from the water to the chariot. If these phrases signify immersion, then what force is to be given to the member of the sentence—"and he baptized him?" If

[7] Mark i. 10.

[8] Acts viii. 31. Without doubt, *anabanta* here refers to *the chariot;* for as yet they had not reached any water.

the phrases and the member of the sentence both imply immersion, then the eunuch was baptized *twice!*—for the whole statement is, they "both went down into the water, *and* he baptized him." Besides, if the phrase "down into the water" signifies immersion, then Philip, the administrator, was *also* immersed: "and *they* went down BOTH INTO THE WATER, BOTH PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH." But if we consider the phrases as referring only to the manner of approaching and leaving the water, they may apply with equal propriety both to Philip and the eunuch, without involving the idea of the immersion of either the subject or the administrator. Therefore, the idea of *mode* cannot be deduced from the declaration, "and he baptized him."

If the particles "in," "into," and the phrase "out of" mean *under*, then Daniel was thrown *under* the lions' den. Jesus went *under* the mountain. Jacob went down *under* Egypt. Zaccheus climbed *under* the tree. Christ and the penitent thief went up from the cross *under* paradise. John baptized *under* Jordan. Jesus came up straightway from *under* Jordan. The sons of the prophets went *under* Jordan to cut wood. The Romans were buried by baptism *under* death. The Galatians were baptized *under* Christ. Paul baptized the jailer *under* the jail. The Jews were baptized *under* Moses, and *under* the sea. Peter went *under* the sea, and cast a hook. All the church were baptized *under* one body. It is needless to multiply instances of the misapplication of these terms; we will conclude by simply stating that the preposition εν, *en*, translated *in* Jordan, in the New Testament, is rendered 150 times *with*, and more than 100 times *at*. It is evident, therefore, that the particles and phrases thrown around the word *baptizo* determine nothing respecting its meaning, and of course can furnish no information concerning the mode of baptism.

Secondly. Since the whole strength of the case turns at

last on the word *baptizo*, we will take it disconnected from its appendages, and examine into its meaning.

It is asserted by the Baptists, that *baptizo* means to immerse, and only to immerse, and needs not the appendage of other words to determine its meaning. Very well; let us take up *baptizo* by itself. "Went down into," and "came up out of" are to be taken away, and "he baptized him" is to settle the mode of the baptism of the eunuch. "When he went up straightway out of," and "in Jordan" are to be taken away, and "when he was baptized" is to determine the mode of Christ's baptism. So, "buried with him" is to be taken away, and "by baptism" is to determine the mode of baptism in the case of the Romans. *Baptizo*, as it now stands alone, is wholly divested of the force of the inference connected with its appendages, and we are to determine the mode of baptism by the inherent meaning of *baptizo*, as it is used in the gospel sense, exclusive of all other considerations. We proceed to consider at large the original meaning of *baptizo*—a word respecting whose meaning the Christian church has been involved in so many unhappy controversies ever since discussion about it commenced.

The primary meaning of *βαπτίζω, in its* EVANGELICAL SENSE, *is* TO WASH—a meaning corresponding to the nature of spiritual baptism, and the character of the Christian dispensation, of which baptism is the initiatory sacrament. In this sense *baptizo* is used rationally and emblematically, since such a meaning is in connection with the whole scheme of salvation; while, in the sense of *immersion*, it is used without connection and without rational signification. It is admitted that classic authors employ the word in the sense of immersion; but then, in the first place, it is to be observed that they often use the word in other senses also; and, in the second place, what did ancient classic authors know about the sacrament of baptism? Had they under-

stood the nature and design of Christian baptism, and then used the word in the sense of immersion, there might be some force in the references which Baptists make to them as authority in settling the evangelical sense of *baptizo*. But as the case now stands, how are we to tell whether the word is to be used in the sense of immersion, or in the other senses in which it is used by classic authors? It is evident that we are to determine its evangelical sense from the gospel; and, if the sense in which it is plainly used in the gospel be clearly determined to be otherwise than what Greek writers give it in *the quotations* usually made by *Baptist* critics, then we are to adopt the evangelical sense in preference to the classical—not that the one is in opposition to the other, but that the evangelical sense of the term is sometimes given by classic authors, which the sacred penmen selected as applicable to Christian baptism.

Preparatory to the consideration of the evangelical meaning of *baptizo*, we invite attention to the following remarks:

First. There are two kinds of evidence addressed to our belief, namely, moral and demonstrative; and such is the constitution of mind, that both these kinds of evidence are regarded equally strong and satisfactory. And such is the nature of certain great moral questions, that demonstrative evidence is inapplicable in settling them: indeed, the most important questions of life, reputation, and property are sometimes settled by moral evidence alone. Moral evidence as effectually convinces as demonstrative evidence does in the plainest questions of mathematics. All philological reasoning is circumstantial, moral, and cumulative, and embraces all the facts and laws and their corresponding mental impressions in a given case.

Secondly. In the translation, or transfer of a word from one language to another, the original signification cannot in all cases be preserved. In John iii. 5, we have—"Except a

man be born of water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Now the primary and classic meaning of the word πνεῦμα—*pneuma*—here rendered Spirit, is WIND; and the *literal* translation should be—"except a man be born of water and the *wind*," &c. Indeed, in the 8th verse, this word is translated *wind:* "the *wind* bloweth where it listeth," &c. Upon the principle of interpretation adopted by the Baptists, it is impossible to show that the doctrine of regeneration, or the personal existence of the Holy Spirit, is taught in these verses. Take another example:—"For the Sadducees say, there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees believe both."[9] The original meanings of the terms here used are: ἀνάστασις—*anastasis*—*a rising up;* ἄγγελος—*anggelos*—messenger; and πνεῦμα—*pneuma*, as above, *wind.* The literal meaning would be—"For the Sadducees say, there is no *rising up*, neither *messenger*, nor *wind;* but the Pharisees believe both"—a translation absolutely ridiculous and absurd. Again: "For with God nothing shall be impossible."—*Οὐκ ἀδυνατήσει παρὰ τῷ θεῷ πᾶν ῥῆμα.*[10] And again: "There shall no flesh be saved,"[11]—*οὐκ ἂν εσώθη πᾶσα σάρξ.* On these verses, Dr. George Campbell says—"These passages in the New Testament Greek are phrases which, in my apprehension, would not have been more intelligible to a Greek author than Arabic or Persian would have been. Ῥῆμα for *thing*, μᾶσα οὐκ for *no one*, and σάρξ for *person*, &c., would to him, I suspect, have proved insurmountable obstacles. This is but a small specimen—not the hundredth part of what might be adduced on the subject."[12] To give but one more example: Νόμος, which originally meant a song, soon came to mean a law, because the first laws of all nations, according to Plato, were

[9] Acts xxiii. 8.
[10] Luke i. 37.
[11] Matt. xxiv. 22.
[12] Prelim. Dis. vol. i. p. 30.

composed in verse and sung; and Aristotle, in his problems, says, that before the use of writing it was customary to keep the laws in remembrance by singing them. The laws of ancient Sparta were all arranged in verse, and so were the laws of Tuisco, the first legislator of the ancient Germans.

Thirdly. Admitting, which we do not, that *immerse* is the meaning invariably given to *baptizo* in classic Greek, yet classic Greek is not to be the standard in defining the meaning of the New Testament Greek—not to be the standard in determining the evangelical signification of *baptizo*. The opinions of learned authors on the subject shall first be adduced. "A Lexicon of the New Testament, at the present day, presupposes the fact, that the language of the New Testament exhibits in many points a departure from the idiom of the Attic Greek. The great question, which so long agitated the learned philologists of Europe, would seem at present to be put entirely to rest. In defining words, those significations are placed first which accord with Greek usage. Then follow those significations which depart from Greek usage, and which are to be illustrated from the Greek of the Septuagint, as compared with the Hebrew, or *depend solely on the usus loquendi* of the New Testament writers."[13] "Classical use, both in Greek and Latin, is not only, in this study, sometimes *unavailable*, but may even *mislead*. THE SACRED USE, AND THE CLASSICAL, ARE OFTEN VERY DIFFERENT."[14] "The language of the New Testament is the later Greek, as spoken by foreigners of the Hebrew stock, and applied by them to subjects on which it had never been applied by native Greeks. After the disuse of the ancient Hebrew in Palestine, and the irruption of the western conquerors, the Jews adopted the Greek

[13] Prof. Robinson's Pref. to Lexicon of the New Testament.

[14] Dr. George Campbell, whom the Baptists regard as one of the most learned scholars of modern times.

language from necessity—partly as a conquered people, and partly from intercourse of life and commerce, in colonies, and cities, founded like Alexandria, and others, which were peopled with throngs of the Jews. It was therefore the spoken language of ordinary life which they learned, not the classic style of books which have come down to us. But they spoke it as foreigners, whose native tongue was the later Aramean; and it therefore could not fail to acquire from their lips a strong Semitic character and coloring. When to this we add, that they spoke in Greek on the things of the true God, and the relations of mankind to Jehovah and to a Savior—subjects on which no native Greek had ever applied his beautiful language—it will be obvious, that an appeal merely to classic Greek and its philology will not suffice for the interpretation of the New Testament. The Jewish-Greek must be studied almost as an independent dialect." [15]

This is involved in the nature of things. When the profound and peculiar truths of the gospel are revealed to any people, the old words of their language must receive a new import and denote new ideas. Says David Brainerd, "There are no words in the Indian language to answer to our English words, Lord, Savior, salvation, sinner, justice, condemnation, faith, adoption, glory, with scores of like importance." In this way the word *baptizo* is to be explained, not in the sense in which it may be used in the Greek classics, but as it is applied to a religious ordinance, signifying a spiritual washing or purification, without the least reference to the mode in which the ordinance is administered. The *classic* signification is not to be confounded with the *generic, sacred* use of the term; and, in this latter sense, Christ and his apostles are competent authorities, since they

[15] Prof. Edward Robinson.

have as good authority to explain their own meaning as Zenophon, Aristotle, or any other classic author has to explain his meaning. The HOLY GHOST gives the evangelical meaning to *baptizo*, to *wash*, to *purify*, as we shall see, and this is the highest authority in the universe. The word *baptizo*, in the wide range of its classic use, never has a religious signification; but it has this signification in its scriptural use; therefore it is to be taken in a different sense in its scriptural use, from what it had in its classic use. In its *classic* use, it does not always mean to immerse —it never did denote an invariable mode in its classic use —and hence cannot denote an invariable mode in its scriptural use.[16] But admitting—which we do not—that in its *original, primitive, classic* use, it invariably meant to *immerse*, even then the meaning of the word in its scriptural sense is to be derived from the new evidence, the new facts, and new circumstances connected with its scriptural use. For such are the laws of mental exercise, that even admitting, which we do not, that *baptizo* in its classic use invariably means to immerse, yet from the effect of immersion, the mind, in the ritual application of the word, might fix upon the effect of immersion alone, and so give the meaning of thorough cleansing or purifying, without any reference whatever to any specific mode as essential. All sound philologists know what influence the imagination, the laws of association, taste, education, habits, manners, customs, and new circumstances, have upon modifying the original, primitive meaning of a word, till the original idea is lost, and a secondary sense substituted.

[16] See Editor of Calmet's Dictionary, some *eighty examples*, taken in part from ancient fathers, and classic writers, and from the Bible, in all of which the word implies less than *immersion*, and in most of which, it implies *sprinkling, moistening, pouring*, or *staining;* and therefore ancient Greek and the Bible do not sustain the exclusiveness of the Baptists.

In reply to the assumption of the Baptists, that immersion is the only legitimate and authorized meaning of *baptizo* we offer the following considerations.

First. *Βάπτω, bapto,* the root or primitive of *βαπτίζω, baptizo,* does not invariably nor necessarily imply immersion. But derivatives lose some of the force of their primitives; hence, even if *bapto* invariably and necessarily means *immerse,* it follows that *baptizo* may mean something less than immerse. But *bapto,* the primitive, does *not* invariably mean immerse; therefore, *à fortiori,* baptizo does not invariably mean immerse.

The first step in this branch of the argument is to show that *bapto,* the primitive, does not invariably and necessarily mean to immerse. The more learned Baptists now admit that *bapto* means to *stain,* to *dip partially,* to *wet slightly,* to *dye,* &c., without any reference to any specific and invariable mode. "And he was clothed with a vesture *dipped,* (*βεβαμμενον,*) *baptized* or *stained* in blood." Rev. xix. 13. A chieftain's garments are not stained in battle by immersing them in blood, but by sprinkling or aspersion. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with *dyed* garments from Bozra? Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that *treadeth* the winepress? I have *trodden* the wine press alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in anger, and trample them in my fury, *and their blood shall be* SPRINKLED *upon my garments, and I will* STAIN *all my raiment.*" Isa. lxiii. 1–3 To the same effect is Matt. xxvi. 23: "He that *dippeth* (*ὁ εμβαψας*) his hand with me in the dish," &c.; which cannot imply a total immersion, as any one acquainted with the mode of eating in the East will at once perceive. And so Dives prayed to Abraham to send Lazarus that he might *dip*—*βαπτι*—his finger, &c. In these three examples from

the Scriptures, and they will suffice, nothing like the idea of entire immersion is implied.

Classical authors maintain the same position. In the Battle of the Frogs and Mice, a mouse is represented as *dyeing* or *coloring*—εβαπτετο—the lake with his blood. "To suppose that there is here any extravagant allusion to the literal immersion or dipping of a lake, is a monstrous perversion of taste. The lake is said to be *dyed*, not to be dipped, or poured, or *sprinkled*. *There is in the word no reference to mode.* Had Baptists intrenched themselves here, they would have saved themselves much useless toil, and much false criticism, without straining to the impeachment of their candor or their taste. What a monstrous paradox in rhetoric is the figure of the dipping of a lake in the blood of a mouse! Yet Dr. Gale supposes that the lake was dipped by hyperbole. The literal sense he says is, the lake was *dipped in blood.* Never was there such a figure. The lake is not said to be *dipped in blood*, but to be *dyed with blood.*" Carson and Cox, on Baptism, p. 67. Again, "Hippocrates employs it to denote dyeing, by *dropping* the dyeing liquid on the thing *dyed*—βαπτεται. This surely is not dyeing by *dipping.*" Ibid. p. 60. Again: "In Arian's Expedition of Alexander the Great—'Nearchus relates that the Indians *dye*—βαπτονται—their beards.' It will not be contended that they dyed their beards by *immersion.*" Ibid. 61. Dr. Carson also observes, "From signifying to *dip*, it came to signify *dye by dipping*—and afterward from *dyeing by dipping*, it came to denote *dyeing* IN ANY MANNER." P. 60. And he adds: "*Use is always superior to etymology as a witness* on this subject. *A word may come to* ENLARGE *its meaning so as to lose sight of its origin.* This fact must be obvious to every smatterer in philology." P. 62. "Use," he continues, "is the sole arbiter of language. *Βαπτω* signifies *to dye by* SPRINKLING, as properly as by *dipping*,

though originally it was confined to the latter." P. 63. No stronger or more candid defence of our argument could be expected of the most accomplished pædobaptist. All that we claim is here candidly conceded. "This is a fact, and were it even against me, I could not but admit it." P. 64. What fact? that *bapto* denotes "dyeing in *any manner*." To proceed farther is useless.

Admitting that *bapto* invariably and necessarily means immerse, according to the laws of etymology, *baptizo*, one of its derivatives, must lose some of the force of its primitive. But we have shown that *bapto* has not this invariable meaning, but is a term of such latitude that it implies *any mode or manner*, according to its use in various authors. Consequently, *baptizo*, its derivative, cannot be restricted to *one* meaning: like its primitive, it implies *any mode or manner*.

Secondly. But we pretend not to settle this as a question wholly of etymology and probabilities. We have positive facts and evidence in the Scriptures, that *baptizo* is used in the sense of *wash* or *purify*, which we shall now adduce.

First. The ordinary meaning of the word, as it is used in the Scriptures, with reference to the influences of the Holy Spirit, means to *cleanse*, to *purify*, to *wash*. The cleansing operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion, is set forth under the idea of a baptism: this indeed all can understand, as the plain and rational meaning of the word in its gospel sense.

Secondly. A dispute arose among the disciples of John concerning baptism as practised by Jesus and John. "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, *behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him*," [17] The question in dispute here was "about purifying," (v. 25,) and hence, with regard to it, the disciples of John referred to Jesus as *purifying* by *baptizing*, while they thought that

[17] John iii. 26.

John, and not Jesus, was invested with authority to administer *baptism* as the rite of *purification*. The terms employed are, καθαρισμοῦ, and βαπτίζει, and the only rational inference, from all the facts in the case, is, that they are synonymous in this instance; and if the force of the word, in its religious application, be determined in this capital instance to be *purify*, then it has this force in all cases of a religious nature, and especially when employed with reference to formal initiation into the church. As καθαίρω, or the later form, καθαρίζω, in Jewish services, as well as heathen rites, meant to purify from the pollution of guilt by expiatory sacrifices, without any reference to any invariable mode, we may conclude that, in this instance at least, βαπτίζω loses all idea of mode, and means to *purify:* and so in all cases of a religious nature.

Thirdly. It was the expectation of the Jews that their Messiah should *purify*. "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a *refiner's fire*, and like *fuller's* soap. And he shall sit as a *refiner* and *purifier* of silver: and he shall *purify* the sons of Levi, and *purge* them as gold, &c."[18] While the whole Jewish nation is expecting the great Purifier, suddenly it is rumored throughout Judea that he is come, and forthwith priests and Levites go out, and inquire of John, "Who art thou?" And when he denies that he is the Messiah, then the question is very naturally proposed to him, "Why *baptizeth* thou then, if thou be not the Christ."[19] The expectation of the Jews, and the evangelical sense we give to *baptizo*, entirely harmonize. But if we suppose *baptizo* here means *immerse*, it is impossible to reconcile such a sense with the prevailing expectations, and the prophetic references of the Old Testament to Christ as a Purifier.

[18] Mal. iii. 2–3.

[19] John i. 25.

Fourthly. The outward and inward baptism, specifically referred to by John, can be harmonized only by giving *baptizo* the evangelical sense of *wash* or *purify*. "I indeed baptize you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." That is, in a *ceremonial* sense, I indeed *cleanse* you with water, but he shall *purify* you *spiritually* with the Holy Ghost. To say that John had any reference to *immersion* in the latter case is absurd, and hence we may infer, that John did not immerse in the former case. Give to *baptizo* the sense of *purify*, and at once the prophecy of Malachi, the baptism of John, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost harmonize in the most exact and rational manner.

Fifthly. The reference made in Heb. ix. 10, to Mosaic purifications, requires that we give the meaning *wash, purify*, to *baptizo*, "Which stood only in meats and drinks and divers *washings*"—βαπτισμοῖς. A comparison is made by the Apostle between the legal typical purifications of the Jewish dispensation, and the real, moral purifications of the Spirit provided by Christ under the Christian dispensation. The *baptismois* here referred to, such as gifts, sacrifices, the blood of sprinkling, the ashes of a heifer, all relate to *persons* and not to *things*. But throughout the scope of the Mosaic ritual, not once is immersion enjoined upon *persons*. The original Hebrew word טָבַל, that means to *immerse*, is not used in a single instance where washing or purifying is enjoined upon *persons*, but in every such case the word רָחַץ, which means to *wash* or *purify*, is used. In a word, the whole Mosaic ritual, in its application to *personal* ablution, might be fulfilled to the letter, without immersion in a single instance. That Paul, in the text above, refers to the Mosaic ritual, in its application to *persons*, and not to *things*, may be proved by reference, not only to the Jewish ceremonial law, but to what he says above: "which was a figure

for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make *him* that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience." (v. 9.) Thus the term *baptismois*, in this scripture, must mean *purifications*, without the remotest reference to immersion.

Sixthly. Several other instances:—The baptism of St. Paul: "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins."[20] The purification of the heart is here typified by *baptism*. The bloody baptism of Christ: It is evident Christ could not have been immersed in his own blood, and the only rational meaning that can be given to *baptizo* in this case, is a sacrificial purification, and this was done by the *outpouring* or *shedding* of his own blood. The baptism of the church at Rome: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death."[21] And Col. ii. 12: "Buried with him by baptism into death," &c. In these passages, nothing can be proved respecting mode from *baptizo;* and with regard to the word "*bury*," it would have been used had sprinkling or any other mode been specifically mentioned. The burial here referred to is spiritual, and hence the baptism here mentioned is spiritual. And what is spiritual baptism? It is the destruction of sin and the purification of the heart—it embraces those baptismal influences of the Spirit that give a spiritual force to the will, a spiritual clearness to the understanding, a spiritual ardor to the affections, a spiritual energy to the power of faith, and an exquisite delicacy to the conscience, by which we become *dead* to the world, and *alive* to God. How then can a person baptized consent to sin? This view of these texts perfectly harmonizes with the drift of the apostle's argument. If mode, in any sense, be implied in

[20] Acts xxii. 16. [21] Rom. vi. 3–4.

these Scriptures, it must be analogous to that mode which the Spirit adopts, and that is sprinkling or pouring, as the Scriptures invariably teach; immersion is out of the question.

It may be added, that the dogma of baptismal regeneration originated in connecting the idea of *purification* with *baptizo*. In the early times of Christianity, the church began to sink the form of baptism into the spirit of it, and to regard that as a condition which was only a sign and seal of regeneration. It would have been impossible ever to confound the outward with the inward *baptism*, if baptism was not symbolical of *spiritual purification*—impossible indeed ever to invest mere *immersion* with the idea of spiritual birth. The Romanists, Puseyites, and Campbellites seize upon the same passages of Scripture, in defence of their pernicious errors, that many of the early Fathers adduced in defence of baptismal regeneration; and the Campbellites themselves, therefore, when they attempt to prove the notion of *immersion* from the Fathers, at the same time prove from their own witnesses, that *baptizo* means to *purify*.

From these considerations, the inference is easy: external baptism, the outward sign, should represent the inward cleansing, and hence *water* is the element used in the administration of external baptism. Likewise the mode of external baptism should correspond as nearly as possible to the mode of spiritual baptism adopted by the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a real, indisputable baptism, visible to the senses, seen by John the Baptist, and the multitudes at the Jordan, by the apostles, and by Peter and the brethren in the instance of Cornelius. And what is the meaning of the word in these instances. Let John the Baptist, who used the word, answer: "He shall baptize you *with* the Holy Ghost."[22] Our Lord himself,

[22] Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; Luke iii. 16.

who was the subject of baptism, shall also answer: "Ye shall be baptized *with* the Holy Ghost not many days hence."[23] That we may fix the sense of the word baptize as to mode, in the above instances, consider the popular meaning of *synonymous words*, which the sacred writers, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, employed, in reference to the same events. "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry you in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power FROM ON HIGH."[24] Here our Lord, by using a word synonymous with baptize, sets forth the idea of spiritual baptism, altogether inconsistent with immersion or plunging. "And suddenly there CAME FROM HEAVEN, and appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it SAT UPON each of them."[25] Here Luke describes the manner in which the apostles were baptized according to the promise of Jesus. And so Peter also bears witness: "The Holy Ghost FELL on them, *as on us at the beginning*."[26] Peter again: "God gave them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us."[27] The prophet Joel bears testimony respecting the mode of the baptism of the apostles on the day of Pentecost. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will POUR OUT of my spirit," &c.[28] Take other instances: "I saw the Spirit DESCENDING FROM HEAVEN like a dove, and it ABODE UPON him."[29] "Jesus having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, hath SHED FORTH this, which ye now see and hear."[30] "That they might receive the Holy Ghost; for as yet he was FALLEN UPON none of them."[31] "God ANOINTED Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost."[32] "The Holy Ghost FELL ON all."[33] "The Holy Ghost SENT DOWN from

[23] Acts i. 5. [24] Luke xxiv. 49. [25] Acts ii. 2, 3. [26] Acts xi. 15.
[27] Acts xv. 8. [28] Acts ii. 16–17. [29] John i. 32. [30] Acts ii. 33.
[31] Acts viii. 15, 16. [32] Acts x. 38. [33] Acts x. 44.

Heaven."[34] "SEALED with the Holy Spirit of promise."[35] In all these instances, we have the words, *descending; coming; giving; falling; shedding; pouring; sitting; abiding; anointing; sealing;*—invested with the very same signification of *baptize* when reference is had to the *mode* of spiritual baptism. Not in one instance does the synonymous word support the idea of immersion or plunging as the mode of baptism by the Holy Ghost; and therefore the word *baptizo* cannot mean immersion when it is used with reference to the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and hence so far from being *restricted to the sense of immersion, as the Baptists affirm, it does not refer to immersion at all.* In one instance, the prediction of Christ is, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost;" and, "the Holy Ghost was *poured* out upon them," is the fulfilment. In another instance, "I will *pour out* of my Spirit," is the prediction of Joel; and "they were all *filled* with the Holy Ghost," is the fulfilment. Not in one single instance in the Scriptures, we believe, does the synonymous word support the doctrine of immersion. Our conclusion then is, that as the evangelical mode of spiritual baptism is not immersion, immersion is not the evangelical sense of *baptizo.* But as the inward spiritual baptism is set forth under the ideas of *descending, falling, pouring, shedding,* the outward formal baptism by water should correspond as nearly as possible to the mode of baptism by the Holy Ghost. The manner of baptism adopted by the Holy Ghost is the highest standard for the mode of outward baptism. If the Holy Ghost, as the divine administrator, baptize by pouring or shedding his cleansing influences upon the heart, surely external baptism by pouring or sprinkling must be most proper, since it is in exact conformity to the inward spiritual baptism. As we have *divine* authority,

[34] 1 Peter i. 12. [35] Eph. i. 13.

both in word and action, for pouring and sprinkling, as the meaning of *baptizo,* we have the highest authority for adopting sprinkling and pouring as the modes in administering external baptism. The resemblance is set forth in a striking manner, both by John and our Lord. "I indeed (says John) baptize you *with* water, but he (Christ) shall baptize you *with* the Holy Ghost."[36] "John baptized *with* water, but ye shall be baptized *with* the Holy Ghost."[37] Here no difference respecting the mode is even alluded to; and as it has been determined that spiritual baptism is administered by pouring, shedding, &c., the mode of outward baptism is so easily inferred, that it is not even mentioned. The Holy Ghost shall be *poured* upon you, in *the same manner* as John *poured, shed, let fall,* water upon you—and the manner of John's baptism is at once determined. The Holy Ghost was poured upon the apostles: in the same manner, we conclude, that the apostles, in baptizing, poured, shed, let fall water upon the converts, and the mode of Christian baptism is at once determined. There is nothing in this conclusion offensive to taste, contrary to fact, repulsive to decency, opposed to analogy, or in violation of the plainest rules of language.

Secondly. Consider some instances from the Scriptures of the application of the word *baptize* in reference to *water.*

We are informed that Nebuchadnezzar was "baptized with the dew of heaven."[38] In the thirty-third verse it is said, the body of the Babylonian monarch "was wet with the dew of heaven." In the Septuagint we have the original Greek: *ἀπὸ τῆς δρόσου, τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ ἐβάφη, apo tes drosou, tou ouranou to soma autou ebaphe;* and in the Vulgate we have, *et rore coeli conspergatur*—SPRINKLED *with the*

[36] Matt. iii. 11. [37] Acts i. 5.

[38] Compare Dan. iv. 23, 25, 33.

dew of heaven. In this instance, the person of the royal subject was baptized by the *descending*, the *falling* of the dew in the night. The king was certainly not immersed in the dew, for two reasons: the condensation of the vapors of the night never could have produced dew of a sufficient depth to immerse him; and in the second place, had he been immersed, he would have been destroyed.

Again: "I would not that ye be ignorant how that all our fathers were *under* the cloud, and all passed *through* the sea; and were all baptized—ἐβαπτίσαντο, *ebaptisanto*—unto Moses *in* the cloud, and *in* the sea."[39] Here the Israelites pass "*under* the cloud," "*through the sea*," "*on dry land*," and consequently, the baptismal element *descended* from the cloud above—GOD HIMSELF being the administrator. Immersion on dry land is an absolute impossibility, and hence, in this instance at least, *baptizo* does not mean immerse.

Once more: "And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he (Christ) had not first *washed*—ἐβαπτισθη—*ebaptisthe*—before dinner."[40] "And when they came from the market, except they *wash*—βαπτισωνται—*baptisontai*—they eat not." Mark vii. 4. The meaning of the term here is a *ceremonial purification*, a mere refining upon the Mosaic ordinances concerning ablution, and has no reference to physical cleanliness. This is the intrinsic and specific meaning here, and about this there can be no controversy. The second point is—what was the *mode* of this ceremonial customary purification among the Pharisees and Jews generally? We maintain that *pouring* was the mode employed. "Here is Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who *poured water on the hands* of Elijah."[41] The same custom prevailed in the days of Christ, and continues still in the East, for customs

[39] 1 Cor. x. 1, 2. [40] Luke xi. 38.
[41] 2 Kings iii. 11.

seldom or never change in the East. "The table being removed," says Pitts, "before they rise from the ground on which they sit, a slave or servant, who stands attending on them with a cup of water to give them drink, steps into the middle with a basin, or copper pot of water, something like a coffee-pot, and a little soap, *and lets the water run upon their hands* one after another as they sit. Such service, it appears, Elisha performed for Elijah." D'Ohsson observes, "The Mussulman is generally seated on the edge of a sofa with a pewter or copper vessel, lined with tin, placed before him upon a round piece of red cloth, to prevent the carpet or mat from being wet: a servant, kneeling on the ground, *pours out the water for his master*; another holds the cloth destined for the purification. The person who purifies himself begins by baring the arms as far as the elbow. As he washes his hands, mouth, nostrils, face, arms, &c., he repeats the proper prayers. It is probable that Mohammed followed on this subject the book of Leviticus." "The Osmanlis are remarkable for their attention to cleanliness. When they wash, *the water is poured from a vase upon the hands over a wide basin*—they never make use of a basin or a tub to wash in, as is the practice elsewhere. It is a common observation among the Osmanlis, that cleanliness corresponds with the purity and integrity of mind." (Report of Mr. Oscanyan's Lectures on Constantinople, contained in Boston Recorder, Jan. 4, 1839.) Certainly our Lord was not expected to immerse or plunge himself before dinner; he simply declined the customary compliment of the Jews, which was paid to the guest by *pouring* water on the feet, and hands also. Jesus did most graciously accept this attention on another occasion. "And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet, but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped

them with the hairs of her head."[42] Dr. Alexander Carson replies, that "people of distinction might have water poured on their hands by servants, but it is not likely that this was the common practice of the body of the people in any nation."[43] Very well, then the water *was poured* upon the hands in the present case, for Christ was regarded as a person of "distinction," and was the guest of a distinguished person, namely, "a Pharisee." So that Dr. Carson himself concedes that *baptizo*, in this case, means to *pour*, as well as to wash, and consequently, he contributes in deciding the mode as well as the meaning of *baptism*. We return to the Old Testament: "As they who bare the ark were come *unto* Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were *dipped* ἐβάφησαν, *ebaphesan*—in the *brim* of the water."[44]—εἰς μερος τοῦ ὕδατος, *eis meros tou hudatos*. The feet of the priests but touched *the brim, the edge* of the water, when the water recoiled and convolved "in a heap," as the priests stood firm on *dry ground*, in *the midst of Jordan*.[45]

Once more: "As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall *dip*—βάψει, *bapsei*—them and the living bird in the blood of the bird," &c.[46] No bird used in the Jewish sacrifices could yield blood enough to render the *immersion of the living bird, the cedar wood, the scarlet, and the hyssop in it possible*, and hence, in this case, the word *baptize* cannot mean to immerse or overwhelm. Again, in the New Testament, "Send Lazarus, that he may *dip*—βάψῃ, *bapse*—the

[42] Luke vii. 44.

[43] Carson on Baptism, p. 16. Dr. Carson is an Irish Baptist minister, and was once a pædobaptist, but having embraced the opposite views, he wrote a work on baptism, which the Baptists hold in the highest estimation.

[44] Josh. iii. 15. [45] Josh. iii. 17. [46] Lev. xiv. 6.

tip of his finger," &c.[47] Of course, the whole finger was not to be immersed—only the *tip* of the finger. "He to whom I shall give the sop when I have *dipped*—*βαψας*, *bapsas*—it."[48] The meaning here cannot be, that the sop was wholly immersed. "He was clothed in a vesture *dipped*—*βεβαμμένον*, *bebammenon*—in blood."[49] The idea cannot be tolerated, that the garment of Christ was immersed in blood. "The *washing*—*βαπτισμοὺς*, *baptismous*—of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables."[50] "The foundation of the doctrine of baptisms"[51]—*βαπτισμῶν*, *baptismon*. "Which stood in meats and drinks and divers *washings*"[52]—*βαπτισμοῖς*, *baptismois*. Now it is evident, that *various modes* of washing are here intended. It may be admitted, that the cups were immersed, though not necessarily so, in order to be washed. But were the "pots and brazen vessels," and the cumbersome "tables," fifteen or twenty feet long by four feet broad, and about four feet high, also immersed? Besides, the doctrine of baptisms is mentioned in the *plural* number. And any one but partially acquainted with the ancient regulations and ceremonial ablutions of the Jewish dispensation, knows that the greater part of them had nothing to do with immersion.

Again, in the Old Testament, "And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times."[53] This he did, verse 14th. "Then went he down, and dipped —*ἐβαπτίσατο*, *ebaptisato*—himself seven times in Jordan, *according to the saying* of the man of God." Here *baptizo* clearly means to *wash;* and it is by no means clear that Naaman subjected himself to a total immersion. "But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold I thought, he would surely come unto me, and stand, and call

[47] Luke xvi. 24. [48] John xiii. 26. [49] Rev. xix. 13. [50] Mark vii. 4.
[51] Heb. vi. 2. [52] Heb. ix. 10. [53] 2 Kings v. 10.

on the name of the Lord his God, *and strike his hand over the place*, and recover the leper."[54] Well assured are we of one thing, that the word here means to wash, which is the meaning contended for in this discussion. To meet this difficulty, Dr. Carson lays down the following canon: "In certain situations two words, or even several words, may with equal propriety fill the same place, though they are all essentially different in their signification."[55] In the above example, therefore, the meaning of *λούω, louo, to wash*, may be expressed by *baptizo;* and consequently, *baptizo* means to wash. Dr. Carson's canon is fatal to his criticisms—the result, no doubt, of the classical research of many years. He unequivocally allows, that *baptizo* and *louo* may, "in certain situations, with equal propriety, fill the same place," and hence they may mean what other words mean, "though they are essentially different in their significations." In this single sentence, Dr. Carson saves others the pains of correcting his criticisms, himself offsetting them all at a single stroke, by adopting a canon which would give *baptizo* the meaning to *wash*, if it had not inherently this meaning.

That I have fairly interpreted and applied the canon of Dr. Carson, take his own words. Referring to the case of Naaman, he says, "This passage is a complete illustration of my canon. The two words *λούω* and *βαπτίζω* are here used interchangeably, yet they are not of the same signification."[56] In the name of common sense, how can words be used interchangeably that have not in some respect the same signification? If words used interchangeably have not the same signification, then Naaman disobeyed the prophet, and the sacred history of the transaction is false; but if words used interchangeably have the same meaning, then *baptizo*

[54] 2 Kings v. 11. [55] Carson and Cox on Baptism, p. 81.
[56] Ibid. p. 87.

and *louo* in this case mean the same thing, and therefore *baptizo* means to *wash*. Dr. Carson again, on same page: "The words *baptizo* and *louo* have their own peculiar meanings even here, as well as anywhere else, without the smallest confusion. To *baptize* is not to *wash;* but to baptize *in a river,* or *any pure water,* implies *washing,* and may be used for it in certain situations. If Naaman *dipped* himself in Jordan he was *washed.*" That is, *baptizo,* implies *washing,* and may be used for it in certain cases. Of course then *baptizo* may mean to wash in a *gospel* sense. Could the most explicit declarations of all the pædobaptist churches be clearer than this admission of Dr. Carson? Placing ourselves then by the side of Dr. Carson, with him, and Elisha, we determine the meaning of *baptizo* to be *to wash.* We make one more remark.

Dr. Carson has given a latitude to the meaning of these words, *bapto* and *baptizo,* by his canon, which no pædobaptist has ever dared to assume. And this is the more remarkable, when it is considered that he had spent so much labor to prove, that one of these words has a *univocal* meaning, and the other but two meanings. On the principle of his canon, "circumstances" and "situations" alone can determine the number of meanings inherent in words, and consequently, language has no fixed laws of interpretation. In vain does Dr. Carson, in his subsequent conclusions respecting the abstract, primary, and invariable meaning of these words, cry out, "decisive" "irresistible," &c. He has forestalled his future progress. This ordinance, so well loaded and directed, sweeps away his preceding labors, and when ruin is complete in that direction, he wheels it around, and keeps up a perpetual and destructive fire throughout his succeeding march. What does it avail him now to marshal Hippocrates, Polybius, Dio, Porphyry, Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, Lucian, Strabo, Josephus, and many other ancient

authorities, since his canon, levelled with fatal precision, pours its thunder into the bosom of his beloved and venerated antiquity? Besides, these very authorities, in some cases, give, with Elisha, the meaning *to wash* to *baptizo*, as Dr. Carson himself shall prove. "There are instances," says he, "in which the word is translated by some WASH, *and in which the general meaning may be thus* well enough expressed in a free version."[57] And yet in the very next sentence, in violation of all consistency, he absolutely cancels this admission. "Still however," he continues, "the word, even in such situations, does not express the idea of washing, and has its own peculiar meaning of *mode*, the idea of *washing* being only a consequence from the *dipping*." If the word does not express the idea of washing, how then is it "translated by some" *to wash?* If it does not express the idea of washing, how can "*wash* be well enough expressed in a free version?" Dr. Carson saw this difficulty; and so we are not surprised to see him, probably before the paper is dry before him, write down a recantation of his last inconsistency. Hear him: "Now as I am pledged to show that the word does not mean to *wash in any manner*," &c. In any manner? Why, just above, he allows, that "washing is a consequence from the dipping." Is not dipping a "manner" or *mode* of washing! "Pledged" to contradict and refute himself? On another point, already examined, I will just here refer to Dr. Carson as evidence. That *baptizo*, when referring to the operation of the Holy Ghost on the heart, means to *wash*, take the following testimony: "The Spirit is said to be *poured out*, not because there is any actual pouring, which is represented by pouring out water in baptism, but from *the resemblance between the effects of the Holy Spirit and those of water*."[58] Then *baptizo*,

[57] Ibid p. 98.

[58] Ibid. p. 165.

when referring to the influences of the Holy Ghost, means to *wash* or *purify*, which is all we contend for at present, and which Dr. Carson admits—although he had declared that *baptizo* does "not mean to wash in any manner." At the same time however, he endeavors to destroy the resemblance between the mode of the application of the Spirit's influences, and the mode of the use of water. "Baptism, whatever be the mode, cannot represent either the manner of conveying the Spirit or his operations on the soul. Though there is a real communication of the Spirit, there is no real or literal baptism."[59] These are mere assumptions, made without a particle of proof adduced to sustain them. But Dr. Carson shall again refute his own position. "But though the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a figurative baptism; yet as respects the transactions on the day of Pentecost, there was a real baptism in the emblems of the Spirit."[60] Indeed! and what was the mode of this real emblematical baptism? Dr. Carson says, in the next sentence, "the disciples were *immersed* into the Holy Spirit by the abundance of his gifts, and they were literally covered with wind and fire." Immersed into the Holy Spirit! Not at all—but granted. And then they were immersed by *pouring*, for pouring was the mode of baptism adopted by the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.[61] Just one remark here:—Is it not probable, that the apostles who had first been baptized by the Holy Ghost by pouring, adopted pouring as the mode of external baptism in the case of the three thousand, who,

[59] Ibid. p. 164.

[60] Ibid. p. 168.

[61] Dr. Gale himself, in his "reflections on Wall," admits that "the word *baptizo*, perhaps, does not so necessarily express the action of putting *under* water, as in general a thing being in that condition, *no matter how it comes so*, whether it is put into the water, or the water *comes over it*." Wall, vol. iii. 122. Consequently, as the apostles, according to Dr. Carson, were baptized by *pouring* on the day of Pentecost, pouring is a proper "action" of baptism.

the same day believed and were initiated into the Christian church? These emblems of the Spirit were *sensible* and *external;* and as they were miraculous, concomitant circumstances of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the idea of pouring is suggested as appropriate and consistent in the administration of the initiating sacrament of the Christian dispensation. Dr. Carson, in explaining the meaning of the word when it refers to the operations of the Holy Spirit, discards all idea of mode, and considers it only as expressing the purifying effects of the influences of the Holy Spirit—and yet for more than 150 pages, he endeavors to convince his readers, that *baptizo* expresses *mode* only, and means to *dip*, and *only to dip*. But when it refers to the agency of the Holy Spirit, he tells you, it has no reference to the *mode* of influence, but to the *results* of influence. Now if *baptizo* has but one meaning, and that meaning is *to dip*—and if *baptizo*, in the example before us, had no reference to *mode*, but to the "effects,"—then it means *nothing* when it refers to the agency of the Holy Spirit. But if spiritual baptism does not imply mode, neither does external baptism; but *baptizo*, when it refers to spiritual baptism, as in the case above, always suggests the mode, and therefore the analogous mode of external baptism should be adopted.

As the critical inquiries of Dr. Carson have great weight with the Baptists, we shall further consider them. They completely refute his own position. The sum of his conclusions may be stated in his own words:—"1st. *Βαπτω*, except when it signifies to dye, denotes *mode*, and nothing but mode. 2d. *Βαπτω* and *βαπτιζω* are exactly the same in meaning, as to increase or diminution of the action. That the one is more or less than the other, as to mode or frequency, is a groundless conceit. 3d. There is one important difference. *Βαπτω* is never used to denote the ordinance of baptism, and *βαπτιζω* never signifies to dye. The primi-

tive word has two meanings, the primary to dip, the secondary to dye. But the derivative is formed to modify the primary alone. 4th. *Bapto* means also to dye. And although this meaning arose from the mode of dyeing by dipping, yet the word has come by appropriation to denote dyeing *without reference to mode.* As this point is of material consequence in this controversy, I shall establish it by examples that put it beyond question. Nothing in the history of the words is more common, than to enlarge or diminish their signification. Ideas not originally included are often affixed, while others drop ideas originally inserted. In this way, *βαπτω*, from signifying mere mode, came to be applied to a certain operation usually performed in that mode. From signifying to dip, it came to signify dyeing by dipping, because this was the way in which things were usually dyed. And afterward, from dyeing by dipping, it came to denote dyeing in *any manner.* A like process may be shown in the history of a thousand other words." This statement of his views clearly, we think, overthrows his own theory. Upon the same ground, on which he extends or diminishes the meaning of *bapto,* he can likewise extend the meaning of *baptizo,* and a thousand other words. For as the idea of mode is secondary and non-essential when *bapto* is used in the sense of dyeing, so the idea of mode is secondary and non-essential when *baptizo,* the derivative of *bapto,* is applied to the sacrament of baptism. As *bapto,* from dyeing by dipping comes to denote dyeing *in any manner,* so *baptizo* from baptizing by dipping, comes to denote *baptizing* IN ANY MANNER.[62] This is conclusive.

[62] The judgment of Professor Stuart, as a biblical critic, is of the highest reputation in the United States. He says of Dr. Carson, "He lays down some very adventurous positions, in respect to one meaning, and *one only,* of words, which, as it seems to me, *every lexicon on earth contradicts, and must always contradict.*" On Mode of Baptism, p. 100.

Thirdly. We advance one step farther in this investigation. The word baptism, as it is used in Scripture, cannot be restricted to one invariable meaning; it means to *dip, imbue, drench, soak, overwhelm, pour, sprinkle, to wash.* If it could be restricted to any one of these meanings, then it might be used *synonymously* with all the rest. "Send Lazarus, that he may *dip the tip* of his finger in water"—*plunge* the *tip* of his finger! "Judas, who *plunges* his hand with me in the dish." "The Word of God was clothed in a vesture *plunged* in blood!" "Our fathers were baptized in the cloud, and in the sea"—*plunged* in the sea, when they were on "dry land!" and *in* the cloud, when they were *under* the cloud! Pharaoh and all his hosts were overwhelmed in the sea, but yet they were not *baptized.* We shall now show by many examples, that the word *baptism,* as it is used in the Scriptures, has *many different significations* as to mode.

First. In the sense of *dip,* or *partial immersion:* "Ye shall *dip* a bunch of hyssop in the blood."[63] "The priest shall *dip* his *finger* in the blood, and sprinkle it."[64] "The priest shall *dip* his *finger.*"[65] "Let Asher *dip* his *foot* in oil."[66] "The *feet* of the priests were *dipped* in the *brim* of the water."[67] "Jonathan *dipped* the *end* of his rod in a honeycomb."[68] "Thy foot may be *dipped* in blood, and the tongue of the dogs in the same."[69] In all these instances, nothing more can be intended than a *partial immersion.*[70]

This decision of Professor Stuart, Dr. Carson himself admits, further on, p. 44.

[63] Ex. xii. 22. [64] Lev. iv. 6. [65] Lev. iv. 17. [66] Deut. xxxiii. 24.
[67] Josh. iii. 15. [68] 1 Sam. xiv. 27. [69] Ps. lxviii. 23.

[70] Dr. Gale admits, that "the word *baptizo* does not necessarily imply a TOTAL IMMERSION or *dipping the whole thing spoken of* ALL OVER, WHICH I READILY ALLOW." (Wall, vol. iii. 147.)

Secondly. In the sense of OVERWHELMING. "Can you be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"[71]—*overwhelmed.* "I have a baptism to be baptized with,"[72]—*overwhelmed.*

Thirdly. In the sense of STAINING.

"DYED attire upon their heads."[73]

Fourthly. In the sense of POURING.

To what has already been said, the following may be added: "And Judith washed herself in (or at) a fountain by the camp."[74] That is, more literally, "she went out and washed herself *at* the spring of water that was in the camp." What, plunged herself in a spring that supplied an army of two hundred thousand men with water? Would she have plunged herself in the open fountain, in the sight of the whole army? Certainly not, and the conclusion is, that she performed this ablution by sprinkling or pouring.

Fifthly. In the sense of SPRINKLING.

"Which stood only in meats and drinks, and *divers washings, διαφόροις βαπτισμοῖς, diaphorois baptismois.* Of these divers kinds of baptism the apostle selects two, namely, baptism by blood, and baptism by water; and of these he also selects *three rites, and all these rites are* SPRINKLINGS. Such was the direction for the great day of expiation. "And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and SPRINKLE it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward: and before the mercy-seat shall he SPRINKLE of the blood with his finger seven times. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and *sprinkle* it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat."[75] And so the apostle observes,

[71] Mark x. 38. [72] Luke xii. 50. [73] Ezek. xxiii. 15.
[74] Judith xii. 7. [75] Lev. xvi. 14, 15.

"If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean," &c.[76]

There is no mode to which the baptism of blood can be referred but to the sprinkling of Aaron on the great day of expiation. From all these instances, severally and collectively, it is evident that the word *baptism* cannot be restricted exclusively to immersion or plunging; *so far from it, they furnish no evidence whatever that immersion was practised in ritual observances, or in the administration of the gospel ordinance of baptism.*

Fourthly. Had it been the original design of the sacred writers to employ a word invariably and necessarily implying *entire* immersion, the copiousness of the Greek language furnished many such terms, which they would have used in preference to *baptizo*—especially if they invested the *mode* of baptism with the importance with which the Baptists so strenuously maintain it is invested. And yet the sacred writers do not, in a single instance, employ one of these terms when they refer to Christian baptism: they invariably use *baptizo* and *baptisma.* While we have but one single Anglo-Saxon term, *plunge*, to express unequivocally an entire immersion, the Greek language has at least eight, perhaps more, that express this idea, such as *ποντίζω, καταποντίζω, βυθίζω, καταβυθίζω, καταδύνω, καταβαπτίζω, εμβαπτίζω,* and *δύπτω*: terms indisputably precise and exact. Henry Stephens defines *pontizo*, "to plunge into the sea." *Katapontizo* is most frequently used, and signifies to plunge down

[76] Heb. ix. 13. When the Levites, it may be added, were set apart to their office, it was done by "*sprinkling* water of purifying upon them," &c. Num. viii. 7. And so a leper was cleansed by *sprinkling*. Lev. xiv. 7. Thus, among the Jews sprinkling was the mode or emblem of purification. But Christ and his apostles were Jews, and were familiar with all the services of the Jewish church, and hence they never could have formed any idea from analogy of purification by *immersion* in water or blood, under the Christian dispensation.

into the sea, to plunge under." Hedericus: "to plunge down into the sea, to plunge under." Donnegan: "to sink in the sea." Grove: "to plunge or sink in the sea." Stephens defines *buthizo*, "to cast into a gulf, the deep, or the sea; to plunge down. *Katabuthizo* signifies the same, and is more commonly used." Passor: "to plunge down, to cast into the deep." Hedericus: "to plunge; from *buthos*, a whirlpool, a bottomless pit, or the deep. *Katabuthizo*, to cast into a gulf, or the deep, to plunge down." Donnegan: "to sink, submerge. *Katabuthizo*, to submerge; to sink down quite to the bottom."

Stephens defines *kataduno*, "to enter within or into a more interior place; to enter into a gulf or the deep." Hedericus: "to go into a more interior place, to enter into a gulf or the deep, to plunge down, to plunge under." Donnegan: "to dip under; to immerse; to sink—*properly*, to cause the sinking of a thing, as of a ship; to plunge; to dive; to go under; to go down," &c. Grove: "to go down; descend into; to sink; immerge; plunge," &c. And so of the other terms. All these terms are used in the Scriptures with the same exact and unequivocal meaning. "But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid, and beginning to sink, (*katapontizesthai*,) he cried, saying, Lord, save me." Matt. xiv. 30. "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, &c., and that he were *drowned* (*katapontisthe*) in the depths of the sea." Matt. xviii. 6. "And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began *to sink*"—*buthizesthai*. Luke v. 7. "But they that will be rich fall into a temptation, and a snare, &c., which *drown* (*buthizousi*) men in destruction and persecution." 1 Tim. vi. 9. And so of other scriptures. To proceed farther would be useless labor.

Here are words in the classical and sacred writings which exactly and unequivocally convey the Baptist idea of mode;

but yet, amid all this profusion of Greek terms, they *reject them all*, and confine themselves wholly to *baptizo* and *baptisma* when they speak of Christian baptism. And yet the Baptists boldly affirm "that there is not another term in the Greek language, whether spoken by pagans or apostles, that can properly express baptizing in the sense subscribed to by the Baptists, if *baptizo* be rejected!" The sacred writers were not ignorant of these terms, and hence would have employed them with reference to the Christian ordinance of baptism, had they entertained the idea of it which the Baptists do. But they do not use these terms, and the inference is inevitable, that the sacred writers did not originally consider *immersion* as essential to baptism, or as obligatory upon the church in all ages. When they speak of baptism, they do not call it immersion, pouring, or sprinkling—they do not refer to any specific mode as invariably necessary. They simply and emphatically employ the term *baptism*, and from this we may conclude that no other term in the Greek language would have expressed the true nature and meaning of the evangelical ordinance of baptism. Other Greek words refer unequivocally to the *manner* of using water, without specifying the purpose intended. *Baptizo and its cognates*, in an evangelical sense, refer to the *specific purpose* intended in the use of water, without specifying the *manner* of using it. Thus the translators of the Bible were wise in retaining the original Greek word *baptism*, only making a slight change in the letters to conform to the idiom of the English language. Had they ventured to make a translation conformable to the sentiments of the Baptists of the present day, we should have the following ridiculous statements in the Bible. For "baptism of repentance," the "*plunging of repentance;*" instead of "I have a baptism to be baptized with," "*I have a plunging to be plunged with;*" instead of "I indeed baptize you with water, but he shall

baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire," "*I indeed immerse you with water, but he shall immerse you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.*" They would have made an equally absurd and ridiculous translation had they substituted sprinkling or pouring for *baptism;* and pædobaptists, if they restricted the meaning of baptism to these terms, would be exposed to the criticism now so fatal to the exclusiveness of the Baptists. We shall conclude this branch of the argument with the following observations.

(1.) No specific mode is positively enjoined by the sacred writers as invariable and necessary.

(2.) In every translation of the Bible into a foreign language, such a change only should be made in the words *baptizo* and *baptism*, as will conform them to the idiom of the language into which they are translated. All the efforts of the Baptists to alter the translation of these words in our English Bible are therefore opposed to the essential nature of Christian baptism, the Christian religion, and the philosophy of language.

(3.) It is a remarkable fact in the history of baptism, that in process of time, amid the corruptions of the church, *kataduno* was unwarrantably substituted for *baptizo*. We are indebted to Professor Stuart for the following researches. "The Greek words *kataduo* and *katadusis* were employed as expressive of baptizing and baptism; and these words mean going down into the water, or immerging. So in the following examples. Chrysostom, Hom. 40, 1 Cor. 1: "To be baptized and to submerge, (*katadusisthai*,) then to emerge, (*anaduein*,) is a symbol of descent into the grave, and of ascent from it." Basil De Spiritu, c. 15: "By three immersions (*en trisi katadusesi*) and by the like number of invocations, the great mystery of baptism is completed." Damascus, Orthodox Fides, 4, 10: "Baptism is a type of the death of Christ; for by three immersions (*kataduscon*)

baptism signifies," &c. So the Apostolic Constitutions, probably written in the fourth century, Lib. iii. ch. 17: "Immersion (*katadusis*) denotes dying with Christ: emersion (*anadusis*) a resurrection with Christ." Chrysostom, ch. 3, Johannis: "We, as in the sepulchre, immersing (*kataduonton*) our heads in the water, the old man is buried, and sinking down (*kataduskato*) the whole is concealed at once: then as we emerge, the new man again rises." Cyril, of Jerusalem, uses this language: "Plunge them (*kataduete*) down thrice into the water, and raise them up again." Now if these Fathers regarded immersion as the precise and unequivocal meaning of *baptizo*, why did they not employ *baptizo*, and not *kataduno?* If, as the Baptists strenuously maintain, *baptizo* has but one meaning, immersion, and these Fathers so believed, there was no necessity for substituting the word *kataduno*. But they did use *kataduno* as a substitute. Therefore, they did not believe *baptizo* has but one invariable meaning, viz. immersion. But if they believed *kataduno* to be synonymous with *baptizo*, they not only acted inconsistently, but were not sustained by the sacred writers, for they never once use *kataduno* with reference to baptism. In either case, the Baptists can derive no advantage from their example.

Fifthly. I invite the reader's attention to another consideration. The most learned lexicographers, both ancient and modern, unanimously give the word a wider signification than that of immersion. Among whom may be mentioned Stephanus, Scapula, Passor, Suidas, Hedericus, Coulon, Schrevelius, Parkhurst, Ainsworth, Schleusner, Grove, and Donnegan. And therefore Dr. Carson, after assuming that *baptizo* "always signifies to dip," admits that he has "all the lexicographers against him."[77] And yet, notwith-

[77] Carson on Baptism, p. 79.

standing this unanimous testimony of lexicographers, and the admission of Dr. Carson, the Baptists generally, from the pulpit, the press, and at the fireside, affirm that all learned lexicographers, ancient and modern, give immersion as the exclusive meaning of *baptizo*. I make the following extract from Chapin's Primitive Church, pp. 43, 44 :—"As it is agreed on all hands, that the native Greeks are the best authority for the meaning of their own language, we shall refer the question to them. We give therefore the definitions of these words, (*bapto* and *baptizo*,) only from the native Greek lexicographers. The oldest Greek lexicographer is *Hesychius*, who lived in the fourth century of the Christian era. He gives only the root *bapto*, and the only meaning he gives the word is *antleo*, to draw or pump water." Next in order comes Suidas, a native Greek, who wrote in the tenth century. He gives only the derivative *baptizo*, and defines it by *pluno*, to *wash*. Passing over the intermediate Greek lexicographers, we come down to the present century, at the beginning of which we find *Gases*, a learned Greek, who with great labour and pains compiled a large and valuable lexicon of the ancient Greek language. His book, in three volumes quarto, is a work deservedly held in high estimation by all, and is generally used by the native Greeks. The following are his definitions of *bapto* and *baptizo* :—

Bapto.—Brecho, to *wet, moisten, bedew*.
Pluno, *to wash*.
Gemizo, *to fill*.
Buthizo, to dip.
Antleo, to draw, to pump water.

Baptizo.—Brecho, to *wet, moisten, bedew*.
Pluno, *to* WASH.
Leno, to WASH, to *bathe*.
Antleo, to *draw*, to pump water.

Sixthly. The most learned divines and commentators of

the church give a wider meaning to *baptizo* than immersion. From these are selected Piscator, Zanchius, Alstedius, Mastricht, Paraeus, Wickliffe, Leigh, Lightfoot, Calvin, Beza, Whitsius, Hammond, Wall, Danaeus, Spanhemius, Bishop Patrick, Calmet, Faber, Doddridge, Stockius, Poole, Wesley, Clarke, Watson, Bloomfield, Stuart—in a word, the whole pædobaptist church.[78] Dr. Samuel Miller, late Professor of Ecclesiastical History, &c. at Princeton, observes, "I am well persuaded that the venerable Dr. Owen, certainly one of the greatest and best men of the day in which he lived, is borne out by truth when he pronounces "that no one instance can be given in Scripture, in which the word which we render *baptize*, does necessarily signify to dip or plunge. In every case the word admits of a different sense; and it is really imposing on public credulity to insist that it always

[78] The Baptists strenuously maintain that the exclusive meaning of *baptizo* is immerse. And yet from the commencement of Greek literature to its close—from the time of Homer, 1000 years before Christ, to the time of Constantinus Harmenopulus, 1380 years after Christ, a period of more than 2000 years, including "all the orators, poets, historians, philosophers, physicians, mathematicians, geographers, rhetoricians, and philologists of Greece, all the Greek Fathers of the Christian church, and the Byzantine writers of the Middle Ages"—during all this long period, no controversy existed about the import of this word—though occasions often arose when the attention of the early Fathers might have been directed to the subject. Why then is the controversy about the meaning of *baptizo* so recent? Simply because till recently no sect arose to limit it to a single signification—indeed, no one dared to do this so long as the Greek continued to be the living, spoken language. "Immersion was never considered essential to baptism till the rise of the Anabaptists in Germany, in the sixteenth century." Dr. Pond, p. 43. The lexicons and vocabularies of Suidas, Zonoras, Hesychius, and others—the numerous treatises on baptism, written in Greek, and frequent allusions to it in the writings of the Fathers—the commentaries which were written on both the Old Testament and the New, in which constant allusions are made to baptism,—contain not one word in favor of the ground taken by the Baptists, but in very many instances directly oppose and contradict it.

does, and necessarily must signify immersion."[79] Dr. Dwight observes, that "the body of learned critics and lexicographers declare that the original meaning of the word *baptizo*, and its root *bapto*, is to *tinge*, *stain*, *dye*, or *color*; and that when it means immersion, it is only in a secondary and occasional sense, derived from the fact that such things as are dyed, stained, or colored, are often immersed for this end. The primary meaning of these terms is *cleansing; the effect, not the mode of washing;* the mode is usually referred to *incidentally*, whenever these words are mentioned; and although capable of denoting any mode of washing, whether by affusion, sprinkling, or immersion, yet, as in many instances, cannot, without obvious impropriety, be made to signify immersion, and in others cannot signify it at all."[80] Mr. Richard Watson observes, that, "if the advocates of immersion could prove what they have not been able to do, that plunging is the primary meaning of the term, they would gain nothing, since, IN SCRIPTURE *it is notoriously used to express* OTHER APPLICATIONS OF WATER. Whatever, therefore, the primary meaning of the verb 'to baptize' may be, is a question of no importance on the one side or the other. Leaving the mode of administering baptism, as a religious rite, out of the question, it is used, generally, at least in the New Testament, not to express immersion in water, but for the act of POURING or SPRINKLING it; and that baptism, when spoken of as a religious rite, is to be administered by immersion, no satisfactory instance can be adduced. In fact, if the true mode of baptism be immersion only, then must we wholly give up the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which in any other mode than *pouring out* was never administered."[81] The passages in

[79] Miller on Presbyterianism and Baptism, p. 66.

[80] Theology, vol. iv., pp. 345, 346.

[81] Theological Institutes, vol. ii., pp. 650, 651.

the New Testament, in which the word *baptize* occurs, are just *ninety* in number. Of these *sixty-five determine just nothing as to mode; sixteen favor the mode of* SPRINKLING *or* POURING,—*two of these render it morally certain that the mode was* SPRINKLING *or* POURING; *and of the remaining nine,* NOT ONE OR ALL TOGETHER DEMONSTRATE THAT THE MODE WAS IMMERSION.[82]

This closes the consideration we give *baptizo,* as it stands disconnected from its appendages in the Bible. What then is the use of these appendages? Simply to express the manner of *approach to,* or *departure from,* or *circumstances at* the water. This analysis presents the whole subject in its true light: the proper meanings of the words are not confounded. It is impossible rationally and philologically to maintain the doctrine of express and exclusive immersion upon the appendages, or the original word *baptizo,* or upon both conjointly. From this whole consideration of the original word *βαπτίζω,* the ground we take is this:—The meaning of the word, in its evangelical sense, is *to wash,* and admits of *any* external mode which the subject may, in his own judgment, infer is the best representation or emblem

[82] Indeed, admit that the general signification of *βαπτιζω* is to immerse, and that the consequent obligation of baptism is imposed upon all believers to be wholly immersed in water, then, in celebrating the Holy Eucharist, the other sacrament, all believers are bound, from the general meaning of the term employed, to eat a full meal whenever they celebrate this divine ordinance. The literal meaning of the word *δειπνον, deipnon,* (1 Cor. xi. 20,) is a feast or supper. But the apostle severely reproves the Corinthians for so regarding the meaning of the term in their celebration of the sacrament, and advises all that are hungry to eat at home; evidently teaching that a rigorous interpretation of the term might lead to a perversion of the sacrament from its real and original design. Upon the strict construction of the Baptists, in the case of the Eucharist, the censure of the apostle would be applicable to them; for certainly a similar error is committed in their interpretation of the word *baptizo.*

of the inward baptism of the Holy Ghost. The word expresses, in the first place, the idea of internal, spiritual washing; and in the second place, it admits the adoption of any mode that shadows forth the baptism of the Holy Ghost. If some think *sprinkling* is sufficient to shadow forth the inward washing, then *sprinkling* is a valid mode to them. If others think *pouring* answers just as well, they are not to be condemned. And if others think immersion answers better, why, there is no objection, unless they are *exclusive* in their judgment. In every case, however, the *spiritual* meaning of baptism is the only important and vital consideration. "Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purification, (*καθαρισμου, katharismon.*) And they came to John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he who was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, the same *baptizeth,—βαπτιζει, baptizei,*—and all men come to him." [83] The subject of dispute here does not seem to be the *mode* of baptism, but the *signification* of it; and it is this alone in a spiritual sense, after all, that is indispensable in the administration of baptism.

One word more. Mode in itself can express nothing of a moral quality. The baptism of water is not called a purification in consideration of any *mode* that may be adopted, but because water is the element employed as a religious emblem, just as the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a spiritual and real purification, because the Holy Spirit is employed in the case. So water be employed in baptism, and the idea of purification be set forth, no matter what is the mode that is employed: the idea of purification or cleansing is suggested by the element used, and not by the mode employed. Just as bread and wine set forth the broken body

[83] John iii. 25, 26. It is clear, from the synonymous meanings of *katharismon* and *baptizei*, that *baptizo*, in this instance, means to *wash*.

and shed blood of Christ, no matter what may be the mode of receiving these emblems; so the emblematical character of baptism is in the water, and not in the mode of its application to the subject. Until it can be clearly demonstrated —and it cannot be—that some great vital truth is connected with immersion, it cannot be enjoined upon any as the only valid mode of baptism. The reason why sprinkling and pouring are preferable as modes of baptism is, because they are more convenient, and analogous to the modes employed in the ceremonial services of the Jewish church, and to the modes adopted by the Holy Ghost in spiritual baptism; and we feel safe in adopting such high standards.

We shall conclude this chapter with the following inferences.

First. *Bapto* and *baptizo* have various intrinsic meanings, and immersion is but one of these meanings,—though immersion is not once used in the Scriptures as the meaning of *baptizo*.

Secondly. The mode implied, in any given case, is to be determined by the circumstances of the case:—knowing the circumstances, we can determine the mode. The circumstances of no case recorded in the Scriptures justify even the idea of immersion, much less the exclusiveness of the Baptists on the subject.

Thirdly. The primary evangelical meaning of *baptizo* is to *wash*, to *purify*, in a sacramental sense: it also implies sacramental obligation on the part of God and man. Mode, then, is non-essential. But knowing the circumstances, in any contested case, we may determine the mode employed in that case. But for the controversy in the premises, there would have been no necessity to refer to the circumstances, and yet an impartial examination, in every case, excludes the idea of immersion.

Fourthly. Had the mode of the ordinance been absolutely essential, the sacred writers would have used a word or words of unequivocal meaning as to mode. This they have not done.

Fifthly. It has been seen, that we cannot determine either the intrinsic meaning of the terms used, nor the mode employed, in any given case, by reference to our dictionary and grammar; but from the context, occasion, times, manners, customs, habits, taste, general sentiments, ideas, and peculiar usages of the people,—in a word, all the circumstances that stand connected with the specific use of the words, and the transaction which they rationally imply; and, in every case, from these considerations, immersion is excluded.

Sixthly. That no moral quality or vital truth of Christianity is connected with mere mode.

Seventhly. It is immaterial what mode be employed, so the sacramental nature of baptism is set forth.

Eighthly. And lastly, sprinkling and pouring are preferable to immersion, since they are more convenient, and are sustained by analogies in the Scriptures of the highest authority.

CHAPTER II.

THE ORIGINAL GREEK PREPOSITIONS.

3. As a third source of evidence respecting the mode of baptism, we shall consider the original Greek prepositions of the New Testament. It will be found, in this examination, that they furnish no ground whatever for the doctrine of immersion; indeed, it will be found, in the application of the rules we shall lay down, that immersion

did *not* occur in a single instance in which they are employed in connection with baptism. The rules are the following:

(1.) When voluntary motion *into* a place is signified, εἰς —*eis*—is used before both the verb and noun or pronoun.

(2.) When voluntary motion *out of* a place is signified, ἐκ or ἐξ—*ek* or *ex*—is used before both the verb and noun or pronoun.

(3.) When motion *to* or *unto* a place is signified, εἰς is used only before the noun, without the verb and preposition.

(4.) When motion *upward* or *downward* from a place, or to a place, is expressed, a preposition is used both in composition with the verb, and before the noun or pronoun; but in this case the prepositions are not the same, nor of similar import.

First. When voluntary motion *into* a place is signified. *eis* is used before both the verb and noun or pronoun.

Take a few examples. "Enter *into* thy closet"—*Εἴσελθε εἰς τὸ ταμεῖόν.* Matt. vi. 6. "Ye shall in no case *enter into* the kingdom of heaven"—*εἰσέλθῃ τε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν.* Matt. v. 20. "And lead us not *into* temptation"—*Καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν.* Matt. vi. 13. "Not every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter *into* the kingdom of heaven"—*εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τήν βασιλείαν.* "And when Jesus was entered *into* Capernaum"—*Εἰσελθόντι δὲ αὐτῷ εἰς Καπερναοὺμ.* "Send us *into* the swine, that we may enter *into* them. And the unclean spirits—entered *into* the swine"—*ἵνα εἰς αυτοὺς εἰσέλθωμεν—εἰσῆλθον εἰς τοὺς χοίρους.* "Neither go *into* the town"—*Μηδὲ εἰς τὴν κώμην εἰς ἔλθῃς.* Mark viii. 26. "And when he was come *into* the house"—*Καὶ εἰσελθόντα αὐτὸν εἰς ὶκον.* Mark ix. 28. "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter *into* life maimed," &c.—*καλόν σοι ἐστὶ κυλλὸν εἰς τὴν ζωὴν εἰσελθεῖν.* Mark ix. 43. And so the 47th verse: *εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ.* But we will not detain the reader

longer with quotations, but direct his attention to the following passages, all of which sustain this first rule in the strongest manner:—Matt. x. 5, 11, 12; xii. 4, 29; xv. 11, 17; xviii. 3, 8, 9; xix. 17, 23, 24; xxi. 10, 12; xxiv. 38; xxv. 10, 21, 23; xxvi. 41; xxvii. 53. Mark i. 21, 45; ii. 1, 26; iii. 1. 27; vi. 56; vii. 17, 18, 19, 24; x. 23, 24, 25; xi. 11, 15; xiv. 38; xvi. 5. Luke i. 9, 40; iv. 16, 38; vi. 4, 6; vii. 1, 36, 44; viii. 33, 41, 51; ix. 4, 34, 52; x. 5, 8, 10, 38; xi. 4; xvii. 12, 27; xviii. 24, 25; xix. 45; xxii. 3, 10, 11, 40, 46, 54; xxiv. 26. John iii. 4, 5; iv. 38; vi. 22; x. 1; xviii. 1, 15, 28, 33; xix. 9; xx. 6. Acts iii. 2, 3, 8; v. 21; ix. 6, 8, 17; x. 24; xi. 8, 12, 20; xiii. 14; xiv. 1, 14, 20; xvi. 15, 40; xvii. 20; xviii. 19; xix. 8, 30; xxi. 8, 26, 28, 29, 37; xxiii. 16, 33; xxv. 23. Romans v. 12. 1 Tim. vi. 7. Heb. i. 6; iii. 11; iv. 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11; ix. 12, 24, 25; x. 5, 19; xiii. 11. James v. 4. 2 Pet. i. 11. 2 John 7. Rev. xv. 8; xxii. 14. These references will be sufficient, and we will only add, that εἰς before both the verb and noun is found in the New Testament 145 times—surely enough to establish the first member of the first rule. But we go farther, and adduce passages in which εἰς occurs before both the verb and the pronoun.

"There is nothing from without a man, that entering *into* him can defile him," &c.—εἰσπορευόμενον εἰς αὐτὸν. Mark vii. 15. "Go your way into the village over against you, and as soon as ye be entered *into* it," &c.—εἰσπορευόμενοι εἰς αὐτήν. Mark xi. 2. And so Mark ix. 25; Luke viii. 30, 32; xviii. 17; xxi. 21. John xiii. 27. Acts x. 3; xvii. 2; xxviii. 30. Heb. iv. 6. Rev. iii. 20; xi. 11; xxi. 27. Many other instances might be given, but these will answer. And so in the Septuagint, the same grammatical rule is scrupulously observed, as for instance, in Gen. vii. 7–16; xii. 11, 14, 15; xix. 3. Ex. xii. 23; xiv.

23 Josh. ii. 1, 3; iii. 15. The example in Ex. xiv. 22, is worthy of special attention: "And the children of Israel *went into the midst* of the sea"—*eiselthon—eis meson tes thalasses.*

Secondly. When voluntary motion *out of* a place is signified, ἐκ or ἐξ—*ek* or *ex*—is used, before both the verb and noun or pronoun. *Ex* or ἐξ is used before the verb and noun in the following examples:—"And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for *out of* thee *shall* come a Governor," &c.—ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ ἐξελεύσεται ἡγούμενος. Matt. ii. 6. "Thou hypocrite, first *cast* the beam *out of* thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to *cast out* the mote *out of* thy brother's eye"—ἔκβαλε—ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ σου. Matt. vii. 5. "There met him two possessed with devils, *coming out of* the tombs"—ἐκ—ἐξερχόμενοι. Matt. viii. 28. "A good man, *out of* the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things"—ἐκ—ἐκβάλλει. Matt. xii. 35. "That which *cometh out of* the mouth, this defileth a man"—ἐκπορευόμενον ἐκ τοῦ στόματος. Matt. xv. 11. "And *came up out* the graves after his resurrection"—ἐξελθόντες ἐκ τῶν μνημείων. Matt. xxvii. 53. And so Matt. xiii. 52; xv. 18, 19; xxi. 17, 39. Mark i. 29; v. 2, 8; vi. 54; vii. 20, 21, 26, 29, 31; xi. 19; xii. 8; xiii. 1. Luke iv. 22, 29; xx. 15. John iv. 30; viii. 42, 59; x. 39; xiii. 3; xv. 19. Acts vii. 3, 4, 10, 40, 58; xii. 11, 17; xiii. 42; xvii. 33; xix. 16; xxii. 18; xxvi. 17; xxvii. 30; xxviii. 3. 1 Cor. v. 2, 10. 2 Cor. vi. 17; xi. 33. Gal. i. 4; iii. 13. Heb. iii. 16; vii. 5; viii. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 9. 3 John 10. Rev. i. 16; iii. 5; iv. 5; ix. 3, 17, 18; xi. 5; xiv. 15, 17, 18, 20; xv. 6; xix. 5, 15, 21; xxi. 1 And so in a multitude of other instances. One hundred and seventeen examples have been examined, in all of which the rule holds good. *Ex*, before the verb and the pronoun, occurs in the following passages:—Mark i. 25, 26; v. 30;

ix. 25. Luke iv. 35. Acts xiii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 13. 1 John ii. 19. Rev. xviii. 4.

Thirdly. When motion *to* or *unto* a place is signified, *εἰς* is used only before the noun or pronoun, without the verb and preposition. "Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came *to* the sepulchre"—*ἤρχοντο εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον*. John xx. 3. "Wide is the gate that leadeth *to* destruction"—*εἰς τὴν ἀπώλειαν*. Matt. vii. 13. And so in many other scriptures. Where *eis* stands before the verb without the noun, it generally, if not always, means *in*, as may be found by reference to Matt. viii. 8; ix. 25; xii. 45; xxii. 11, 12; xxiii. 13, 14; xxvi. 58. In several instances where *eis* occurs before the noun, without the verb and preposition, it is translated *into;* but even in these instances the action is *involuntary or constrained. Eis*, standing alone, never means *into*, though connected with the verb or noun, but before the verb it invariably means *in*.

Ek before the verb, generally, if not always, means *out;* and before the noun or pronoun, it means *of* or *from*. In connection only, therefore, does *ex* or *ek* mean *out of*, or *out from*, as the case may be.

Fourthly. When motion *upward*, or *downward*, from a place, or to a place, is expressed, a preposition is used both in composition with the verb, and before the noun: but in this case the prepositions are not the same, nor of similar import. In expressing motion *downward* to a place, *kata* is generally used in composition with the verb, and *eis* before the noun: and in expressing motion *upward from* a place, *ana* is commonly used in composition with the verb, and *ex* or *apo* before the noun. "Now Peter and John *went up*—*anebainon*—together *into*—*eis*—the temple," &c. Acts iii. 1. "And Joseph also *went up*—*anebe*—from—*apo*—Galilee." Luke ii. 4. Here the same verb and the same preposition are used as in Matt. iii. 16 to express the motion

of Jesus in *going up from* the river Jordan. "And he was seen many days of them which *came up with* him—*sunanabasin—from—apo*—Galilee." Acts xiii. 31. "After three days he (Festus) *ascended—anebe—from—apo*—Cesarea." Acts xxv. 1. And so in the Septuagint, this rule is observed with astonishing exactitude. Gen. ii. 6; xvii. 22, are worthy of special attention. Gen. ii. 6: "there *went up—anebainen* —a mist *from—ek*—the earth:" here the same verb and preposition are used that are employed in Acts viii. 39 to express the motion of Philip and the eunuch in *coming up* from the water. Gen. xvii. 22: "and God *went up—anebe* —from—*apo*—Abraham:" here the same verb and preposition are used that are employed to express the motion of Jesus in *going up from* Jordan. Other examples of motion downward to a place may be found in Luke x. 30; xviii. 14. John ii. 12. Acts vii. 15; xiv. 25; xvi. 8; and xxv. 6.

Such are the grammatical rules according to which the Greek Testament is to be explained, and there are perhaps no rules in any language of more general application than these. A careful examination of the Greek Testament, from first to last, will result in the conviction of their astonishing universality. It is true, as to all general rules, there are some exceptions to these rules; but they are all unimportant and irrelevant, *having no application whatever to a single specific case of the* ORDINANCE *of baptism recorded in the Scriptures.* If there were a single exception to the application of these general rules in the sacred record of Christian baptism, and this exception might be employed in favor of *immersion* in that single case, the exception should be admitted; *but there is not a single exception in the premises—not one.* The general rules only are applicable with the most convincing exactitude in *every* case in which the mode of administering the sacrament of Christian baptism has been made a matter of controversy.

We shall now apply these rules in the examination of the celebrated cases in which these prepositions are used in connection with Christian baptism.

"And were baptized of him *in* Jordan, confessing their sins"—ἐβαπτίζοντο ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ. Matt. iii. 6. Had the verb εμβαπτίζω—*embaptizo*—been used in this case, then, according to the first rule, the doctrine of immersion might be sustained from the force of the Greek prepositions; but the preposition stands alone before the noun, without connection with the verb, and the conclusion is, that immersion is not intended. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water"—Καὶ βαπτισθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνέβη εὐθὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος. Matt. iii. 16. Here the preposition employed is *apo,* which is ordinarily rendered in the New Testament *from. Ex,* which before the verb, means *out of,* in this instance is not used, either in composition with the verb, or before the noun: it is not employed at all in this case. Had ἐξέρχομαι been employed instead of ἀναβαίνω, and ἐκ instead of ἀπό, the conclusion would be clear that Christ was immersed. The true translation, therefore, of *apo,* in this case, should be *from,* and not "*out of.*" "And they went down both into the water"—κατέβησαν—εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ. Acts viii. 38. "And when they were come up out of the water"—ἀνέβησαν ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος. v. 39. *Eis* only is used as a governing preposition, in the first instance, disconnected from the verb, and consequently means *to* or *unto;* and *ek,* in the second instance, stands alone, disconnected from the verb, and consequently means *from,* and not *out of.* Had εισέρχομαί been used, in the first instance, instead of καταβαίνω; and ἐξέρχομαί been employed, in the second instance, instead of ἀναβαίνω, then, according to the rules we have laid down, immersion might be sustained in the case of the baptism of the eunuch; but as εἰς only is used, in the first instance, and ἐκ only in the second, the conclusion

is irresistible that immersion was not practised in this case. As baptism in the case of the Jews, and of Jesus by John, and of the ennuch by Philip, was not performed by immersion, and as these are the cases on which the Baptists depend, and which they ordinarily present, as the strongest cases in support of their views, we deem it needless to apply the rules above any further, though the application might be made with equal effect in every other case of Christian baptism recorded in the Bible. In conclusion, it is worthy of observation, that the rules of interpretation we have given are sustained by the classics.

It is easy to see the influence of the *imagination* of the Baptists in explaining the case of the eunuch. They imagine several things: first, that there was a stream of water at the place where the eunuch was baptized; secondly, that the stream of water was of sufficient depth for immersion; and thirdly, that even then the eunuch was immersed: not one of which circumstances is referred to in the scriptural account of the case. There is no proof that there was a stream of water at all at this place; or if a stream was there, we have no proof that it was a foot deep; or if a foot deep, there is not a particle of proof that the eunuch was immersed. And so *imagination* supplies all the circumstances in the baptism of Christ, the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, the jailer, Lydia, and the thousands baptized by John, in order to make out a case of immersion: but the plain rules we have applied in this chapter furnish incontestible proof that immersion was not practised in one of these instances. On every hand the Baptists are opposed by insurmountable difficulties; and in my judgment at least, not a single case of immersion can be fairly proved from the Bible to have been observed in the administration of the sacrament of Christian baptism. If one case of immersion could be fairly proved, this would not

establish the *exclusiveness* of the Baptists with respect to MODE, unless it had been enjoined as *invariable;* but as not a single case of immersion can be proved—*a fortiori*, the *exclusiveness* of the Baptists is not sustained by the Scriptures.

But we go one step farther, and proceed to show what the Greek prepositions *do mean* when used in connection with Christian baptism. They are four in number, viz. ἐν, *en;* εἰς, *eis;* ἀπὸ, *apo;* ἐκ, *ek*, or ἐξ, *ex*—a careful examination of which will furnish us with proof that there is nothing in them to support the opinion that baptism should be administered by immersion. We begin with *en*. It has various meanings.

First. It primarily denotes the *time* and *place* of a transaction, without specifying *mode*. "Now when Jesus was born *in* (*en*) Bethlehem of Judea, *in* (*en*) the days of Herod the king:" *the time* and *place* of the birth of Christ. "*In* (*en*) those days came John the Baptist, preaching *in* (*en*) the wilderness of Judea:" *the time* and *place* of John's preaching. "And (Christ) was *in* (*en*) the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel:" *the place* where Christ remained in retirement till he entered publicly upon his ministry. "And there were *in* (*en*) the same country shepherds abiding in the field:" *the place* where the shepherds were attending to their flocks. "And John did baptize *in* (*en*) the wilderness:" *the place* where he baptized. "And these things were done *in* (*en*) Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing:" *the place* where John was baptizing *beyond* Jordan. "And John also was baptizing *in* (*en*) Enon, near to Salim:" *the place* where he was baptizing. "And were baptized of him *in* (*en*) Jordan, confessing their sins:" *the place* merely where he baptized, within the banks of the river, near the edge of the water, and yet not in the water. Dr. Carson himself admits this:

"Instead of keeping John the Baptist ten hours every day in the water, *I will not oblige him to go into the water at all. He might have stood on the bank.* He might have been *in* the *river*, yet *not* in the *water:* ALL WITHIN THE BANKS IS THE RIVER." On Baptism, pp. 336–7, 339. And so Richard Watson: "And when within the bed of the stream, he might as truly be said to be *in* the river, when mere *place* was the thing to be pointed out, as if he had been immersed in the water. The Jordan in this respect is rather remarkable, having, according to Maundrell, an *outermost* bank by its occasional swellings." The remark of this traveller is, "After having descended *the outermost bank*, you go a *furlong* upon a level ground, before you come to the immediate bank of the river." Theo. Insts. p. 654. A furlong is the eighth part of a mile, that is, *two hundred and twenty yards.* One anywhere on this beach might be said to be *in* Jordan, and yet "*not in the water.*" *Place* is all that is signified, and no reference whatever is made to the *mode* of baptism. This is the primary meaning of *in*, a meaning which might be illustrated by pages of quotations from Greek writers. To give but a single example: ἔτυχον δ' ἐν τῷ κήπῳ περιπατῶν, "I happened to be walking *in* the garden." Plato. And Buttman sustains this view; "'*EN* stands in answer to the question *where;* and signifies *in*, often also *by, at, among.*" Grammar, p. 413.

Secondly. The preposition εν, *en*, indicates the *instrumental* cause or *means* employed in baptism. "I indeed baptize you *with* (*en*) water." "Thou shalt love the Lord —*with* (*en*) all thy heart, and *with* (*en*) all thy soul, and *with* (*en*) all," &c. "If the salt have lost its savor, *wherewith* (*en tini*) shall it be salted?" Thus, in the phrase "*with* water," the very nature of the case renders it necessary that *en* be rendered *with.* And this Dr. Carson

admits: "I may be asked, do you deny that it (*en*) may be translated *with?* I do not deny this, yet I am disposed to lay stress on it." Carson and Cox on Baptism, p. 191. In one case, it indicates the *place where* baptism was administered—as *in* Bethabara, *in* Enon, *in* Jordan; and in another case, it signifies the *instrumental* cause or *means*, governing the dative—as "*with* water." In the former case, mode is not signified; in the latter case, immersion is out of the question. All that can be said of *en*, in the sense of *with*, is, that it denotes specifically that *water* is the instrument used in performing baptism: the *quantity* of water used, or the *mode* of using it, is not denoted or specified; and yet the necessity of the case excludes *immersion*. The Baptists frequently give us the following version:—"For John truly *immersed in water;* but ye shall be *immersed* in the Holy Ghost." The objection to this is, that in the one case, as water is properly used as the *instrument*, in the other case, the Holy Ghost, who is the active *agent*, is represented as a passive element in which the apostles are plunged, as a man is in water—which is a rendering not only in opposition to reason and sound theology, but to the history of the case, for the Holy Ghost, in baptizing the apostles, SAT UPON them—a statement that, if it imply *mode* at all, favors affusion rather than immersion.

The other prepositions to be considered are *eis*, *ek* or *ex*, and *apo*. Greek prepositions are frequently interchanged. "Jesus was baptized by John *in* (*eis*) Jordan"—the only instance of *eis* with the accusative case after the verb *baptizo*. *Eis*, *into*, in this passage, is substituted for *en*, *in*. In the following verse we have—"And straightway coming up *out of* the water," &c. The preposition here employed is *apo*, *from*, and thus the proper translation is, "*from* the water," and not *out of* the water. This Dr. Carson himself concedes: "I admit the proper translation of *apo* is *from*,

and not *out of;* and that the argument from the former is not of the same nature with that which is founded on *ek, out of.*" Cox and Carson on Baptism, p. 200. This is all we wish to prove. That *eis* does not mean *into* may be also proved from the history of the baptism of the eunuch. "They both went down *into* (*eis*) the water." *Eis* may in this instance be translated *to.* "And when we were all fallen *to* (*eis*) the earth," not *into* the earth. "Jesus therefore cometh *to* (*eis*) the tomb of Lazarus." "Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came *to* (*eis*) the sepulchre. So they both ran together; and that other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first *to* (*eis*) the sepulchre. Thus, "they went down both—from the chariot—*to* (*eis*) the water." It may be replied, "They both came up, *out of* (*ek*) the water," implying that both had been *into* the water. But *ek,* in this passage may be substituted by *apo,* as in many instances *eis* is placed in contrast with *apo.* "*From* (*apo*) city *to* (*eis*) city." "*From* (*apo*) Jerusalem *to* (*eis*) Jericho." "The way that goeth down *from* (*apo*) Jerusalem *to* (*eis*) Gaza." Matthew and Mark use *apo* (*from*) instead of *ek* (*out of*) when they describe the Saviour's departure from Jordan after his baptism. Besides, *ek* is often used to denote simply *the point from which* motion is made. "Howbeit there came other boats *from* (*ek*) Tiberias." "Get thee *from* (*ek*) thy kindred." "Who shall deliver me *from* (*ek*) the body of this death?" "Who hath warned you to flee *from* (*apo*) the wrath to come?" Thus, we may translate the passages under consideration, "And straightway coming up *from* the water"—and "they went down both *to* the water—and when they were come up *from* the water." Any one conversant with the Greek must admit the justness of these criticisms, and hence come to the conclusion that *the fact,* and not *the mode* of baptism, is all that is intended in these sacred scriptures. The *fact*

of baptism is positively stated and settled: the *mode* of baptism in these cases, is a matter of so little importance, that it is left to inference; yet the history of the fact is so plain, that inference excludes immersion, and supports affusion. Thus, on every hand, a candid and proper examination of the Greek prepositions which are used in connection with baptism, is fatal to the Baptist theory of immersion.

CHAPTER III.

THE HARMONIOUS CONNECTION OF THE MODE WITH THE KNOWN CIRCUMSTANCES OF SPIRITUAL BAPTISM, AND THE PLAN OF SALVATION.

In this chapter, we continue the consideration of the mode of baptism. In the preceding chapters, we considered the mode of baptism as it is plainly inferred from the Scriptures, the original word *baptizo*, and the original Greek prepositions, *eis*, *ek*, *ex*, and *apo*. As we have regarded it all along as a subject of inference, we now proceed to the fourth source of inference—

4. The harmonious connection of the mode with the known circumstances of spiritual baptism, and the plan of salvation. The significant, expressive, and striking meaning of water baptism is best set forth when the mode of administering it conforms to the mode by which the influences of the Holy Spirit are imparted to the believer. The most proper mode of baptism, therefore, is *that which best represents the spiritual baptism*. The Scriptures universally set forth the mode of the Spirit's agency in baptism under the ideas of "sprinkling," "pouring," "baptizing with"—and a corresponding mode of external baptism may

be observed. To refer to but few instances.[1] It is worthy of observation, that whenever reference is made specifically to baptism by the Holy Spirit, *immersion* is NEVER *once expressed or implied*, as the mode employed. Immersion, therefore, has nothing in it significative or emblematical of spiritual baptism; and as a mode of baptism, it is without analogy and without signification. Moreover, it is impossible to ridicule sprinkling and pouring as modes of baptism, without reflecting upon the modes adopted by the Holy Spirit in imparting spiritual benefits to man—without being more than indifferent to the favorite and impressive figures, allusions, and statements of the sacred writers, when they refer to the manner by which the richest blessings of the everlasting covenant are communicated to the heart of the believer. Baptism is emblematical both of the *effects* and *mode* of the operation of the Holy Ghost, and nothing more as an emblem. Immersion may be emblematical of the effects of the operation of the Holy Spirit, but as an emblem of the mode of the operation of the Holy Spirit it is wholly defective. But sprinkling and pouring are expressive emblems in both these respects, and, therefore, are to be preferred to immersion as modes of baptism. The use of water, in any mode, may be emblematical of the purifying effects of the operation of the Holy Spirit; but when the mode itself has in it no emblematical meaning, baptism, as a sensible *rite* of the church is so far defective—and such is baptism by immersion. But sprinkling and pouring, being complete in their emblematical character, are the most appropriate modes of administering the initiating sacrament of the Christian church.[2] But to be more particular.

[1] Isa. xliv. 3. Ezek. xxxix. 29. Joel ii. 28, 29. Zech. xii. 10. Acts ii. 17, 18; x. 45. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. Isa. lii. 15. Ps. lxxii. 6. Hosea vi. 3.

[2] "To say that it [immersion] figures our spiritual death and resurrec-

First. Consider the *united* testimony of the prophet Joel, John the Baptist, the blessed Jesus, St. Luke, and the apostle Peter. Joel: "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will *pour out*—εκχέω—my Spirit upon all flesh," &c. John, referring to Christ who should fulfil this prophecy, declares, "He shall baptize—βαπτίσει—you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." And Jesus explains the meaning of John, and confirms the prophecy of Joel. "For truly John baptized—ἐβάπτισεν—with water, but ye shall be baptized—βαπτισθήσεσθε—with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." And therefore, in fulfilment of this prophecy of Christ, Luke tells you: "And there appeared unto them (the apostles on the day of Pentecost) cloven tongues, as of fire, and it *sat upon* each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." And now Peter explains the whole matter: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will *pour out*—εκχέω—my Spirit on all flesh," &c., and Peter also explains the baptism of John. "As I began to speak," says he, referring to the conversion of the Gentiles, "the Holy Ghost *fell on* them *as* on us at the beginning, (Pentecost.) Then remembered I the word of the Lord that he said, *John indeed baptized you with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.*" Here the mode of spiritual baptism is set forth by Joel, John the Baptist, our Saviour, Luke, and Peter; and it will be safe to follow such guides in adopting the mode of external baptism.

Secondly. St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2: "Moreover brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the

tion, has, we have seen, no authority from the texts used to prove it; and to make a sudden *pop* under the water to be emblematical of burial, is as far-fetched a conceit as any which adorns the Emblems of Quarles, without any portion of the ingenuity." Watson's Insts. vol. ii. 660.

sea, and were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea." In this case, as already observed, GOD himself was the administrator, and is the highest authority for us. The cloud passes from the front to the rear, between the Israelites and the Egyptians, and in passing over rains upon the Israelites, according to the Psalmist: "the clouds *poured* out water."[3] And Paul says, they were baptized in *the sea.* But Moses says, they went over on *dry ground:* "and the children of Israel went *into the midst of the sea on the dry ground.*"[4] And observe specially the 21st verse of the same chapter: "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea *dry land,* and the waters were *divided.*" This strong east wind, agitating the waters, recoiling and convolving tumultuously, caused the spray from the surges to dash over the watery precipices on either hand, and thus *sprinkle* the wondering Israelites *in* the sea, without immersing one of them. Had the Israelites been immersed on this occasion, they would have fared no better than the Egyptians, and no deliverance would have been wrought in their case. They could not have been immersed on *dry land.* They could not have been *immersed* in the sea had the cloud come down upon them, for then they would have been *overwhelmed,* and not immersed in the proper *sense* of the term; but the cloud passed *over* them, to a position between them and the Egyptians. They could not have been immersed in the sea, except by the closing of the sea over them; but they went over on dry land. And yet they were all *baptized;* and it is inconceivable how they were baptized in any other way than by sprinkling or pouring. The circumstances of the passage of the Red Sea, interpret them as you will, cannot favor immersion, or oppose sprin-

[3] Ps. lxxvii. 16. [4] Ex. xiv. 22.

kling or pouring. It is worthy of observation in passing, that, *all the children* likewise, were *baptized* in this instance.

Thirdly. Hear Isaiah: "So shall he sprinkle many nations."[5] This prophecy doubtless has reference to the universality and fulness of the gospel blessings; and the argument respecting the mode of their communication is a brief one. If the word "sprinkle" is to be taken *literally*, then the mode is at once specified. Or, if the word "sprinkle" has a spiritual meaning, and is to be taken figuratively, then the outward baptism ought to correspond to the inward baptism; so that in either case, the mode of external baptism is easily suggested. It was this passage of Scripture that Philip found the eunuch examining, and hence we infer, that when he descended from his chariot to the water, he was baptized by "sprinkling."[6]

[5] Isa. lii. 15.

[6] In order to evade the force of this argument, the Baptists have made a fruitless effort to distort the original meaning of the Hebrew by referring to the Septuagint translation. "The LXX translated this word [yazzeh] into *thaumasontai*, which signifies either to astonish, or to cause to exult or rejoice. But in no instance is it equivalent to *sprinkle*, as is known by all who understand the Greek language." Chapin's Letters, p. 48. The same ground is taken by the Baptists in the "Baptismal Question" in "Review" by Wm. Hague, p. 26. In the first place, the question is not to be settled by the *Septuagint*, but by the original Hebrew. In the second place, the *Hebrew* word *yazzeh* uniformly means in the Scripture to *sprinkle*. As, "Thou shalt take the blood that is upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and *sprinkle* it upon Aaron," &c. Ex. xxix. 21. "And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and *sprinkle* of the blood seven times." Lev. iv. 6. "And he shall *sprinkle* of the blood of the sin offering upon the east side of the altar." Lev. v. 9. "And he shall *sprinkle* upon him that is cleansed from the leprosy seven times." Lev. xiv. 7. And the Vulgate translation of the word is in harmony with the Hebrew word: "*Iste asperget gentes multas.*" Isa. lii. 15. In the third place, in reference to this passage, Professor Ripley observes, "Was the prophet, I ask, speaking of any particular outward observance to be performed; or did he simply convey the idea that God would purify his people from their iniquity? And did he not represent this moral

Fourthly. Ezekiel comes next. The Jews are yet to be converted and introduced into the Christian church, and this is to be formally set forth by baptism, the initiating sacrament of the Christian dispensation. Hear the prophet, hundreds of years before this event: "For I will take you from among the heathen, &c., then will I *sprinkle* clean water upon you," &c.[7] Whether literal or figurative, *sprinkling* is the mode of baptism indicated by the prophet.

Fifthly. Consider Peter's question respecting the baptism of Cornelius and his family. "Can any forbid water that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"[8] This question presents three things: first, that the spiritual baptism was received *before* the external baptism; secondly, the propriety of the correspondence between the mode of the inward and outward baptism; and thirdly, the strong probability that the water *was brought* and *applied*. "Can any forbid water," that it should be brought and applied to a *baptismal* use in the case of these persons who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

Sixthly. Matthew shall be heard. "Then went out to him [John the Baptist] Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him *in* Jordan, confessing their sins."[9] We have no objection to the translation of the preposition εν—*en*—in this instance, in our English version. It is translated correctly. The translators were too well acquainted with the nature of the river Jordan to translate it otherwise, as we shall presently see. As John was now opening a new dispensation, and as

purifying by the emblem of *sprinkling*, to which their ritual had accustomed them as significant of purification?" Ripley's Exam. of Stuart, p. 139.

Professor Ripley, a Baptist, had too much sense to give the original Hebrew word the meaning assigned to it in the Septuagint.

[7] Ezek. xxxvi. 24, 26. [8] Acts x. 47. [9] Matt. iii. 5, 6.

great multitudes were daily initiated by baptism, it was necessary that he should take his position at some most eligible place. In the southern deserts of Judea, the streams are few and scanty, probably in the summer entirely dried up. The nearest large body of water is the Dead Sea. The western banks of this great lake are mostly rugged and precipitous; besides, natural feeling and religious awe would have caused the people to shrink from receiving the holy ordinance in these fetid, unwholesome, and accursed waters. The usual station, therefore, which John selected, was Bethabara, the ford of Jordan, which tradition pointed out as the place where the waters divided before the ark. Here, though the adjacent region toward Jerusalem is wild and desert, the immediate shores offer spots of great convenience and picturesque beauty. The Jordan has a kind of *double channel.* In its summer course, the shelving banks, to the tops of which the waters reach at its period of flood, are covered with acacia and other trees of great luxuriance, and amid the rich vegetation and grateful shade afforded at this spot, Italian painters have imagined the unruffled Jordan reflecting the wondering multitudes of every class and age, gathered around with deep interest and intense curiosity, and John performing the sacred rite to listening and devotional thousands. The multitudes baptized went down into the Jordan to the water in the inner channel, and were baptized—how? Let John himself answer: "I indeed baptize you *with* water"—here *in* Jordan, *on* the bank of the *inner* channel. This explains Christ's coming up *out of, or from—ἀπό*—the water, and reconciles Matthew and John, the former saying that the ordinance was administered *in* Jordan, and the latter asserting that he baptized *with* water. One might have gone down *into* Jordan without touching the water. We would not have the translation altered. This relieves the minds of such as are

troubled about the example of Christ, since we conclude that as Christ ascended from the bank of the inner channel, a radiant light, with the rapid and undulating motion of a dove, DESCENDED UPON him, and the voice from heaven was heard, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

That the *phrase* "in Jordan" does not necessarily involve the idea of immersion, let us consider the passage of the Israelites over Jordan as described by Joshua: "And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, when ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still *in* Jordan."[10] And yet they were not immersed, for the waters were immediately *divided*, and the priests stood firm on *dry ground*, IN THE MIDST of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on *dry ground*. Finally, we have seen, in the examination of the original Greek prepositions, in the preceding chapter, that ἐν, the preposition here used, never means *into*, except in connection with the verb, and in this case it is used disconnected from the verb, and, therefore, in this place it cannot denote immersion.

Thus, as baptism in a spiritual sense is set forth by the prophets, Christ, and his apostles, under the ideas of sprinkling and pouring; therefore the external mode of baptism should be sprinkling or pouring, to correspond to the mode of spiritual baptism. In a word, there can be no force or importance at all in the mere *mode*, unless it be of such a *significative* character as to represent the internal spiritual baptism, that thereby the harmony of the whole plan of redemption may be preserved. And hence, we infer, that sprinkling and pouring are the most appropriate modes of external baptism, because they preserve the harmony, con-

[10] Josh. iii. 8.

nection, and simplicity of the whole Christian scheme. We do not, however, exclude immersion: all we mean is, that immersion cannot be sustained on the ground of *analogy* and the rational probabilities connected with the instances of baptism we have mentioned. All the force of signification, analogy, probability, and consistency is in favor of sprinkling and pouring as the most proper modes of administering the initiating sacrament of the Christian dispensation: *on these grounds, immersion cannot be sustained even as a proper mode—much less* as the *most proper*, or as the *only proper* mode. A single remark shall close this chapter. The idea of unity arises in the mind long before investigation and comparison have verified it. While we are combining a thousand particulars, each suggests the necessity of something remaining to complete the process, and, every step of the process, we anticipate unity and harmony in the final result. When the path of investigation is plain and easy, any incongruity or disagreement that arises is readily perceived. The system of evangelical truth is consistent in all its principles and institutions, and in the examination of the Scriptures in this chapter, we perceive in the dogma of *immersion* such an incongruity or disagreement, that we cannot reconcile it with the general system of truth. The Baptists give more importance to immersion than to any other external service of Christianity—an importance, which neither the Bible, nor reason, nor common sense justifies—a mode of an ordinance which is less adapted than any other to impress the heart with moral feelings and religious emotions. Christ and his apostles never made such ado about the mode of any institution of Christianity, especially of that which is of inferior importance when compared with the rest. It is not only an incongruity, but a bold innovation, to invest baptism with the same import which Christ and his apostles connected specifically and distinctly with the

eucharist, and thus, in a great degree, to confound the two sacraments. Why say so much about the "solemn associations" and "holy tendencies" of immersion, which, indeed, few at any time can even *imagine* to be suggested by it, and say nothing about the external power and sacred influence of the eucharist, the Sabbath day, and ministry, which occur so often in one's life, and which all most readily admit? Why this strenuous, persevering, and pertinacious effort to exalt to supreme importance the mere *mode* of an ordinance, which, though of great importance, Paul regarded of so little weight compared with the *spirituality* of the gospel, as to thank God that he had baptized but few among the Corinthians? Do immersionists ever affirm, as Paul did, that they were sent, not to baptize, but to preach the gospel? Do not immersionists direct their preaching rather to the *water* of some pond or stream, than to the *blood* of Jesus? Does not such zeal justly merit the rebuke of Christ: "If ye had known what that meaneth, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*, ye would not have condemned the guiltless?" And may they not properly be classed with Peter, who, when Christ bathed *the feet* of the disciples, considered *that* not enough, but which Christ thought to be sufficient?

But the Baptists reply, "immersion is a cross to be taken up." Then why are not crosses connected with all the other external services of Christianity? Why select this from all the rest, and make it more burdensome than all the rest? Immersion, indeed, is often exceedingly inconvenient, and if this is to be considered a cross, especially to females, why not connect some inconvenience with each of the other institutions of Christianity, and call it a *cross*, and so have a cross to be taken up in each case? Why hit upon the mode of *baptism* as a cross, and invest it with a religious sanctity? If there *is* a spiritual crucifixion in immersion,

why are not all believers who are immersed, more exemplary than other Christians? But the difference, if any exists, is not so great as to be perceived in a single instance: it never yet has appeared that a man was a better Christian than his pious neighbor, because he was immersed. What! does it harmonize with sound views of the Christian system, that nearly the whole church should be regarded as *unbaptized*, as in a state of *disobedience*, unworthy of *recognition* as Christians, and as worthy of *exclusion* from the *communion table*, because of difference in opinion and practice respecting the mode of a religious ordinance? Is it rational that the Baptists should make difference in opinion respecting the mere *mode* of an ordinance of Christianity, a sufficient ground for a distinct ecclesiastical organization that precludes the most intimate union with all other branches of the Christian church? Especially when the ground of this preclusion has not incorporated in it one single element or doctrine of the plan of salvation? Indeed, destitute of connection and harmony with the plan of salvation, the doctrine of exclusive immersion might be safely expunged from the creed of the Baptist church, and so a uniform practice in the administration of the sacraments might be intr - duced, by which not only all Christendom would rejoice, but the success of Christianity be the more rapidly promoted.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL NATURE OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY LEFT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE CHURCH.

5. THE *substantial* nature of the institutions of Christianity is all that is specifically enjoined by Christ and his apostles as binding upon the church in all ages: *the mode*, or *circumstantial* nature of the institutions of Christianity, is left to the discretion of the church.

First. Man is substantially the same everywhere, and always. Hence, the truth of God, adapted to man's substantial nature, is immutable. But circumstantially, man is infinitely various; and hence changes may be made in the external government of the church, as circumstances may require, provided nothing be done which is in conflict with the essential principles of the gospel. That is, while preaching, prayer, the observance of the Lord's day, the sacraments, &c. are essential, and enjoined as obligatory to the end of time, as adapted to man's substantial nature; the *mode* of preaching, of praying, of observing the Lord's day, and of administering the sacraments, is non-essential, and indifferent, and so may be adapted to man's circumstantial nature, whatever it may be, provided it be not immoral or irrational. As man's circumstantial nature is infinitely various, the exercise of power in matters in themselves not essential and indifferent, such as the regulation of outward forms and ceremonies to suit different ages and countries, is left to the discretion of uninspired men. It is true, this

power may be abused, and it has been, by the church; but a sufficient restriction is found in the maxim, that no outward form or ceremony is to be adopted and practised which is inconsistent with the plain and immutable truth of God. Such are the imperfections of man, and the vicissitudes to which he is essentially exposed, that in many respects, no form of external church government can be permanent and uniform; and hence, in the nature of things, the church, in its external constitution, must be subject to various changes and modifications. But the spirit or essential principles of the church, must never be compromitted, nor in any case be modified or weakened, to suit the imperfections of man, or the changes of time. Through all prosperous and calamitous events of history, the purity and force of original principles must be preserved, and the lustre of truth remain undimmed. However its limits may be extended, or its influence augmented, or its authority respected, from age to age, the essential truth of the Bible is to be preserved in its original spirit and scope. The laws which are to govern the church, and which are the centre of union, are of two kinds: those which are *divine*, enacted by God himself, contained in the Bible, immutable, consisting of *doctrines* to be believed, the *credenda*, and *doctrines* to be practised, the *agenda*, and *precepts* which enjoin *experience*, all of which are adapted to all forms of humanity, in all ages of time; and those which are enacted by the church, viz. rules and regulations for the better administration of the word, the sacraments, and discipline. The divine laws are the basis of the unity of the church: the ecclesiastical are the basis of variety in Christian communities; that is, there may be a difference of opinion as to *mode* of worship, and the *manner* of observing the ordinances of Christianity, but this difference must, in all cases, be in harmony with the gospel and Divine Providence, and not cause a difference in re-

ligious practice, or a departure in the least degree from the simplicity and spirit of the gospel. Thus, the church of Christ, according to evangelical principles, is *universal*, that is, "one body;" and though separated by the necessity of providential circumstances, and existing in different places and ages, and governed by different modes of external government, it retains all the unity possible. And so the evangelical ordinances are the rights, not only of one branch of the Christian church, but of the whole church of Christ; and hence, a person who receives *baptism* from one branch of the Christian church becomes a member of the "one body," or universal church, that is, in the language of Acts, he is "added to the church." And so a person who joins in the Lord's supper with one branch of the church, unites with the whole church, in every place, who "show forth" the Lord's "death." And so also when he forfeits right to be associated with one branch of the church, he ceases to be a member of the universal church.

Ecclesiastical government is *the science of adaptations* in harmony with the spirit of the gospel. No ecclesiastical form of government can be immutable, and hence, in accordance with the very nature of things, no rules and regulations of a fixed and immutable character are prescribed in the Bible. The gospel is designed to improve and exalt mankind, and hence, rules and regulations, applicable in the earlier stages of improvement in any nation, or community, may not be applicable in some subsequent advanced stage of progress. The old rules and regulations may now be obsolete and inapplicable, and new rules and regulations adapted to the new condition are required; but in the adoption of new rules, for the new condition, no principle of the gospel, we repeat, is to be sacrificed or compromitted. The law of external progress requires a corresponding external change. The different habits, manners, pursuits,

employments, professions, climate, and character of different nations, as well as their relative local intelligence, and relative moral and political improvement, present insurmountable barriers to any uniform system of external church government, and necessarily require that there be corresponding modifications in the rules and regulations of the church. Thus, the positive and invariable rites and ceremonies of the peculiar people of the Jews were regarded by Christ and his apostles as unsuitable to "all nations," and so abrogated, and the ceremonial form of the church left open for the required modification and adaptation, to "the end of the world." The apostles made no modifications, repeals, or changes in church government inconsistent with the spirit of the commandments given to them by Christ. They were invested with authority to provide for the wants of the church *as they should arise*. Such forms, practices, and institutions of the church as were of such a nature as to require no change, are recorded as such in Scripture: the rest are omitted. Thus, the form of baptism, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," is of such a nature as to require no change to the end of the world. Mere *modes* are all omitted; the *substance* only is of divine appointment, and the adoption of any *mode* in harmony with the *substance* is left optional with the church. Though the sacred writers speak of baptism again and again, directly and indirectly, and under a variety of aspects, they have not stated a single term, or fact, or figure, that defines clearly what mode was employed, in a single instance, and that puts the question of mode beyond a doubt; and yet every instance recorded is reconcilable with perfusion and sprinkling, while not one is related which, in our judgment at least, can be rationally reconciled with plunging or immersion. If then the apostles themselves did not regard the mode *they* employed, in any case, to be of such importance as to require unequivo-

cal specification, it is evident that they did not regard *mere mode as an essential matter*, and so have left the church at liberty to vary the mode as circumstances may require.

Secondly. That the circumstantial nature of the institutions of Christianity is left to the discretion of the church, *may be proved from* ANALOGY.

The Lord's supper is a divine and positive institution, and yet the mode of celebrating it is not specifically enjoined, though we know precisely the circumstances and the mode of its celebration by our Lord and his apostles. They met in the *night;* we meet in the *day*. They met on *Thursday;* we meet on *Sunday*. They met in an *upper chamber of a private dwelling;* we meet in the church, or house of *public* worship. They used *unleavened bread*, and *the pure juice of the grape;* we regard these particulars as indifferent. They received the sacrament in a *recumbent posture;* the church now receives it *standing*, *sitting*, or *kneeling*. Now there is not a church in Christendom that conforms to the circumstances of the apostolic mode of receiving this sacrament. It is universally conceded, that the practice of Christ and his apostles as to the *mode* of receiving one of the sacraments does not bind us. If Christ and his apostles regarded the circumstantial nature of one of the sacraments of so little consequence as not to make it binding upon us, even though the circumstances of its original celebration are definitely stated, it is evident that they regarded the mode of observing the other sacrament also of no consequence. Indeed, by strict analogy, though the *mode of baptism* had been made a matter of specific sacred history, even then the apostolic mode would not be any more binding upon us than the apostolic mode of receiving the eucharist is, unless it had been positively and specifically excepted and enioined as binding upon all people and in all ages. But as the apostolic mode of baptism is not even definitely stated, it is in-

conceivable how the Baptist can rationally make an exception in this case.

Thirdly. That the circumstantial nature of the institutions of Christianity is left to the discretion of the church, *is confirmed by* FACT. All evangelical churches, though baptized in different ways, are equally regarded by God as Christians, as well those who are baptized by immersion as those who are baptized by sprinkling or affusion. They all receive the regenerating and sanctifying grace of God—they all experience an ardent love for the Saviour, and manifest an intense and laudable zeal for the promotion of his cause among men—they all labor with success in the cause of Christ—they all receive gracious answers to prayer in seasons of affliction and temptation and trial—they all enjoy the special presence of the Holy Spirit in the proper observance of the sacraments—they all enjoy a special spiritual profit in preaching and hearing the word, and in singing the praise of God—they all enjoy the presence of God in the hour of death—they all are received into the everlasting kingdom of God—and they all will be judged worthy of eternal life, and exalted to as high degree of blessedness in heaven. This is enough—God's seal of approbation on earth is enough—his seal and welcome on the last day will be enough—enough to prove that God does not consider diversity of opinion as to the mode of baptism to be of essential consequence in the accomplishment of the great interests of religion, personal and relative. Do not the Baptists place themselves in opposition to the mind of God? Do not the Baptists make requisitions at variance with the Divine administration?

We shall close this branch of the argument with two or three quotations. Grotius observes, that "ritual institutions must give way not only to a public necessity, but to a public benefit and advantage." The pious Mr. Henry says,

"let the circumstance give way to the substance, and let not the thing itself be lost upon a nicety about time." And Luther remarks, "It is not the water that produces the benefits, but the word of God which is connected with the water, and our faith confiding in the word of God in this baptismal water. For without the word of God, the water is mere water; but with the word of God, it is a baptism." Luther's Catechism, 4th part, ques. 5th. "*For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*" Gal. v. 6. It will be perceived that we have proceeded thus far in this chapter upon the gratuitous concession that immersion was practised by the apostles, and then deduce that immersion is not binding upon the church in subsequent ages, since the circumstantial nature of Christianity is left to the discretion of the church—*and the* MODE *of baptism is not recorded as a* SPECIFIC EXCEPTION. But we do not even make this concession—and go one step farther.

Fourthly. Sprinkling as a mode of baptism is more in accordance with the *substantial* nature of Christianity and the common sense of mankind than immersion.

It was customary among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins, to wash their *hands* in token of purity. According to the Mussulman's creed, the devotee is pronounced *wholly clean* upon washing *the hands, feet, face, and a part of the head.* The principle that *entire purity* is significantly represented by the application of water to a *part* of the body only, has been clearly recognised by different nations, in different ages of the world—a principle that is so rational, that the Bible itself has sanctioned it—indeed, a principle which, it is probable, all nations have borrowed from the Bible, and so by the providence of God has obtained among "all nations" as preparatory to the easy adoption of the mode of baptism when the gospel should be preached in "all

the world." That this principle is sanctioned in the Bible, we shall now proceed to show. Among the ancient Jews, the elders of the city, nearest which a murdered man was found, were required (Deut. xxi. 1–9) to "wash their *hands* over a slain heifer," in token of their innocence, and the innocence of the people of Israel: a *partial* washing was all that was required. In token of the *entire* purity, David says, "I will wash my *hands* in innocency." Ps. xxvi. 6. So Pilate "took water and washed his *hands*, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person." Matt. xxvii. 24. David again: "*Sprinkle* me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." Ps. li. 7. And so Ezekiel: "Then will I *sprinkle* clean water upon you, and you *shall be clean*." Ezek. xxxvi. 25. And so the Jewish and Christian dispensations are compared: "The blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of a heifer, *sprinkling* the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh." Heb. ix. 13. "Having your *hearts sprinkled* from an *evil conscience*." A *real spiritual* cleansing, not a ceremonial, is represented by the same word: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the *sanctification of the Spirit*, unto obedience and *sprinkling* of the blood of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. i. 2. Again: "Ye are come—to Jesus and to the blood of *sprinkling*." Heb. xii. 24. Again: "There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." 1 John v. 8. The operations of "the Spirit," and the application of "the blood" of Christ, are represented by "sprinkling;" to "agree in one," therefore, analogy teaches that "the water" in baptism should be administered by sprinkling. Thus, *sprinkling* as a mode of baptism is in harmony with the substantial nature of Christianity; that is, as it is in exact harmony with the scriptural examples of mode representing *entire* purification, ceremonial and spiritual, it is perfectly in accordance with Scripture.

Sprinkling, as a mode of baptism, is founded upon a principle long since settled by Jehovah himself, that a *partial* washing is sufficient to represent entire spiritual purification; and when opponents ridicule sprinkling as a mode of baptism, they ridicule a principle sanctioned and settled by Divine authority from the remotest antiquity of the church, and recognised by the common sense of mankind.

As there is then no definite model of church government prescribed in the New Testament, so there is no specification of the mode of administering the sacraments of the Christian church. Positive institutions may be specifically enjoined in the word of God, while the circumstances and mode of their original observance may not be enjoined as of perpetual obligation, and hence the circumstances and mode of their original observance are to be regarded as non-essential. Circumcision was a positive institution of the church, under the Jewish dispensation, but the manner of performing it is not specifically detailed. The manner and circumstances of the original observance of the Lord's supper are nowhere specifically enjoined in the Bible, and consequently no invariable manner or mode can be instituted as necessary to its celebration in the present day. "As *oft* as ye *eat*," &c. gives a latitude that leaves the frequency and manner of the celebration of the holy eucharist optional with the church. And hence the various Christian denominations differ from each other in the frequency and manner of the observance of the Lord's supper. What is specified is solemnly binding, as for instance, the recurrence and observance of the Sabbath. Moses was bound to make the snuffers of pure gold; to prepare the holy oil by mixing certain specified ingredients; to make the priest's robe of such a quality, color, and length; to construct the ark, tabernacle, &c. of such materials, and of such a size—for he received specific instructions respecting these things from

God on the mount. But where is the mode or form of the Christian church, in every particular, and especially the manner of the observance of its ordinances, clearly prescribed in the Scriptures? Not in the Gospels, not in the Epistles, nor in the Acts of the Apostles, nor anywhere else in the Bible. The system of Christianity, we repeat, is designed for every age and nation of the world—a system at once sublime, tender, tolerant, and impartial; bearing the infirmities of the weak, and prescribing no rite, or mode, which is not of easy and universal application. Thus, a little bread and wine has been thought sufficient to show forth the design of the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and so a little water is sufficient to show forth the design of baptism, the other sacrament of the Christian church: so the design is accomplished, the sacrament is properly administered. *Bread* and *wine*, in the one case, and *water*, in the other case, are specified as the *emblems;* but the manner of using them to show forth the design of the sacraments is nowhere specified and enjoined in the Bible. Had Jesus Christ and his apostles judged the manner of observing the sacraments of the Christian church essential, it is evident then they would have stated it specifically; but as they have not done so, they differ materially from the Baptists with regard to the doctrine of baptism. The Baptists accomplish the design of the Lord's supper by the use of a little bread and wine—why not pursue the same course with regard to the design of baptism? In this sense, immersion "is a sin by *excess;*" and in another sense, it "is a sin by *defect.*" As a *washing*, it is admitted, that it does illustrate the purifying effects of the Holy Spirit; but beyond this it means nothing that is rational or emblematical, since the mode of the Spirit's baptism is without representation. This double emblematical sense is set forth either by sprinkling or pouring.

CHAPTER V.

COLLATERAL PROOFS.

6. We proceed, in the last place, to the sixth source of information respecting the mode of baptism—namely, collateral proofs.

First. That mode of baptism is most proper which is of *universal application*,—since the Christian dispensation, of which baptism is the initiating sacrament, is designed to be a universal blessing. One of the indispensable characteristics of a sacrament is, that it be universal in its application. But in certain cases of disease, as well as in the feebleness of sickness, and approach to death, immersion would not only be fatal, but horrible. And so in certain latitudes of the earth, and, even in our own country in certain seasons of the year, immersion would be attended with inconveniences in the highest degree imprudent and dangerous, if not altogether unacceptable in the sight of God, utterly destitute of spiritual profit, and wholly useless in a spiritual sense to man. And so in vast and arid deserts, where for many wearisome days not a drop of water can be found to drink, much less enough for immersion. And so in the cases of persons imprisoned, where immersion is impracticable, as in the case of the Philippian jailer. All this is avoided by the milder, more convenient, and more appropriate modes of sprinkling and pouring.

Secondly. That mode is most proper which best comports with the design of baptism as it respects the state of the subject's mind at the time of baptism. The proper reception of

baptism requires a calm and unruffled spirit, imbued with the serene, devotional feelings of awe, gratitude, and love. Amid the circumstances of immersion—the trembling, shivering, shrinking—step by step of alarm and agitation, through the cold and deeper waters—the apprehension, the painful apprehension of sinking—the frequent strangling—the novelty of the circumstances—the gaping, curious crowd—the fear of accident—all combine to confuse the mind of the subject, especially if a female, toiling under the weight of heavy apparel, drifting in the water, and struggling, under no small embarrassment, toward the outstretched arms of friends on the shore, and restored to composure only when shielded by a friendly mantle hastily thrown over the almost fainting person, or protected in some shelter at hand, or seated in a closed and rapidly retiring carriage. Amid all these distressing circumstances, how is it possible to preserve that calm, collected, solemn, and devotional frame of mind, which religion demands in the administration of her ordinances and the reception of her blessings? How solemn and impressive however is this ordinance, when it is administered by sprinkling or pouring in the sanctuary, in view of the serious and worshipping assembly!

Thirdly. Immersion, in the case of females, is indelicate. One of two things must be true: either the immersion of females is indelicate, or our notions of delicacy are false. Religion, in the whole scope of its principles, ordinances, institutions, practices, and customs, never violates true taste, and all true taste is founded upon the purity of religion. Now of all the services of religion, immersion of females—delicate in their forms, gentle in their manners, retiring in their dispositions, modest in their feelings, chaste in their sentiments, and shrinking with scrupulous care from the gaze of the world—is made the only indelicate branch of external service found in the whole arrangement of the Chris-

tian church. The plunging a female under the water by a man, though he be the holy minister of God, under the circumstances usually attending the immersion of females, I have no words to justify, except as the act respects its religious associations. What other considerations can justify the action? Is it reasonable to suppose, that the pure religion of the gospel, the defence of modest and delicate woman, imposes upon her this most unpleasant duty, without some obvious and sufficient justification? There is nothing like the immersion of females that obtains the sanction of public opinion, morality, and refined taste, in polished society. Take away from immersion its religious associations, and you turn away with confusion from the scene. Does religion dispense with modesty in the administration of her ordinances? I ask, does religion impose that as binding, from which the world retires, and which it would not witness with any respect, but for its religious associations? On what other ground is all this justified?—indeed, on what other ground would woman consent to go before a gazing multitude, to be plunged in the water? None whatever. But does God impose that which nothing else allows? Alas, what scenes sometimes occur at these "baptizings," as they are called, on the mill-pond bank, or river shore, crowded with gazing, laughing, curious men, rude and polished, white and colored, holy and vile—some pitying, some averting their heads, others laughing, others blushing, and others rejoicing when the scene closes without accident or misfortune! Woman! subject not thyself to a useless service for Christ, by compromising the feelings of delicacy to the impulses of a morbid piety. Such a humiliating tribute is not demanded of thee by the holy and indulgent Jesus. He would rather see thee bathe his feet with thy tears, and wipe them with the hair of thy head, than consign thy frail form to the "liquid grave." No, Jesus will not be dis-

pleased if baptism in the form of immersion be declined by thee.

It is truly surprising, that the mind, in other things well informed, can be induced to submit to some things from mistaken views of religious obligation, under the solemn impression that it is doing God's service. Pardon me, ladies,—formerly, females were baptized *naked.* The subject was led down into the water by those of her own sex to the proper depth, and afterward the administrator approached and immersed her by gently pushing her head forward, and then retired, leaving her to her attendants.[1]

[1] Lest the fact should be denied, that the primitive Christians received baptism in a state of *nakedness,* I furnish the reader with the following testimonies. "The ancient Christians, when they were baptized by immersion, were ALL BAPTIZED NAKED, whether they were men, women, or children. Vossius, De Baptism. Disp. 1, ch. 6, 7, 8, has collected several proofs of this, which I omit, because *it is a* CLEAR CASE." Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. vol. ii. p. 417. "This rite was performed by three immersions, and *the body was divested of clothes.* In order to preserve decency in the operation, the baptismal font of the women was separated from that of the men, and they were as much as possible attended by the deaconesses of the church." Gregory's Church Hist. London Edition, 1795, vol. i. p. 89. cent. 2. "The primitive Christians baptized *naked.* Nothing is easier than to give proof of this by quotations from the authentic writings of the men who administered baptism, and who certainly knew in what way they themselves performed it. *There is no ancient historical fact better authenticated than this.*" Robinson's Hist. of Baptism. Edi. 1717, c. 15, p. 94. Mr. Robinson is a Baptist historian of the highest reputation among the Baptists. Basnage, "than whom," it is said, "no man understood church history better," observes, "When artists threw garments over pictures of the baptized they consulted the taste of the spectators more than the truth of the fact." In administering baptism to the women, the method adopted seems to have been this: "They took great care to preserve the modesty of any woman that was to be baptized. None but women came near or in sight, till she was undressed, and her body in the water: then the priest came, and putting her head under water, used the form of baptism. Then he departed, and the women took her out of the water, and clothed her again with white garments." Wall, vol. ii. p. 418.

The preservation of modesty was impossible. Yet this was primitive usage, and it greatly embarrasses the Baptists. They foresee the difficulty, and compromise the obligation to adhere strictly to the ancient practice, by saying, "the primitive Christians baptized NAKED; we baptize CLOTHED."

As this immersion of females is unquestionably indelicate, *the inference is a strong one* that it is not indispensable to the baptism of the other sex, since, under the Christian dispensation, which is universal in the distribution of its blessings, its initiating sacrament must be universal in its application. It is not to be supposed, that Christ would enjoin an initiating sacrament of the Christian dispensation which is not equally applicable to every age, sex, and condition of believers, and in every case perfectly consistent with modesty, purity of taste, and the holiest emotions. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are *pure*, whatsoever things are *lovely*, whatsoever things are of *good report*, if there be *any praise*, think on these things."[2]

Fourthly. The difficulty in certain cases of baptism stated in the Scriptures, upon the supposition that immersion was

"No exception was allowed in any case, even when the most timid and delicate female importunately desired it. This fact is established, not only by the most direct and unequivocal statements, and that by a number of writers, but also by the narration of a number of curious particulars connected with this practice." Dr. Miller. "It is notorious and admits of no contradiction, that baptism of *those days of immersion* was administered to men, *women*, and CHILDREN, in *puris naturalibus*, naked as Adam and Eve before the fall," &c. &c. Cyril of Jerusalem testifies the same thing: "As soon as ye came into the baptistery, ye put off your clothes, * * * and being thus divested, ye stood imitating Christ, who was naked upon the cross. * * * A wonderful thing! ye were naked in the sight of men, and were not ashamed," &c. Dr. Stuart, Bib. Rep., No. 18, p. 380.

[2] Philip. iv. 8.

the mode adopted, is avoided upon the presumption that sprinkling or pouring was practised in those cases. That mode is the most proper which most easily removes the difficulties connected with many cases of baptism mentioned in the Scriptures. We shall consider the prominent instances of this character.

(1.) The baptism of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost.

First, we want *time* for the baptism of so large a number by immersion. Peter commenced his sermon "the *third hour* in the day," that is, 9 *o'clock in the morning*, the Jewish hour of *morning prayer*, and must have preached at least *one hour*, for in addition to what is recorded of his sermon, it is stated, that "he exhorted and testified with *many other words*." The awakened thousands are next to be instructed, the confessions of the converted are to be received and examined, and three thousand are selected from the multitude. Arrangements are now to be made for their baptism, or formal initiation into the Christian church; and as they had left home without the most distant idea of being converted and baptized, they were utterly unprepared for the ordinance, upon the supposition that it was administered by immersion, and so much delay must be had before the proper raiment can be obtained—unless we suppose they were baptized without clothing altogether, or that they remained on the ground during the public exercises, or returned home soaked and dripping in their wet clothes. And then apartments adjacent to the place of baptism are to be provided respectively for the men and women. To these considerations may be added the great deal of delay and inconvenience occasioned in the baptism of the females, especially as they had not come prepared with suitable apparel for a speedy administration. Before all these preparations for the ceremony could be made, four hours at least must elapse, and it

is 1 *o'clock* before a single person is baptized. Now the Jewish day closed at 6 P. M., and the three thousand were baptized "the same day." Here then we have *five hours*, that is, *three hundred minutes*, in which *twelve apostles* are to baptize *three thousand persons*, or *one hundred* every *ten minutes*, or *fifty* every *five minutes*, which allows *one minute and twelve seconds* for each baptism, and all this is to be done without the loss of a second. It was absolutely impossible. In the present day, it requires at least *four* minutes to dispose of a case of immersion with decency; and upon this basis, the twelve apostles would have required *one thousand minutes*, or *sixteen hours and four minutes*, to immerse three thousand persons; and all this is to be done without the loss of a second; and to have done this must have required them to stand in the water *during the remainder of the day, and the subsequent night, till four minutes after* 5 *o'clock in the morning of the next day:* and yet they had but *five hours* for the work, and all this was done "the same day." We repeat, it was absolutely impossible. Besides, the apostles had not physical strength adequate to immerse so large a number in so short a time. The time is so limited that they have not a moment to rest and take breath. "A gentleman of veracity told the writer that he was once present when *forty-seven* were dipped in one day, in the usual way. The first operator began, and went through the ceremony, until he had dipped *twenty-five* persons; when he was so fatigued that he was compelled to give it up to the other, who with great apparent difficulty dipped the other *twenty-two*. Both appeared completely exhausted, and went off the ground, into a house hard by, to change their clothes and refresh themselves." Scripture Directory for Baptism by a Layman, 14. "We have just seen an article in the *Philadelphia North American*, containing an account of the recent revival in Cincinnati, in

which we find the following remarks: "A gentleman informs us he saw *eighty-five* adults receive at one time the ordinance of baptism, *when the officiating clergyman was obliged to desist through exhaustion*, although a large number of other candidates were in attendance." Kurtz on Inf. Baptism, pp. 227, 228. If in the present day, with all its facilities and improvements for immersing, *three men* could not immerse *one hundred and thirty-two* without exhaustion, how was it possible for *one apostle* to immerse *two hundred and fifty in five hours?* The apostles were but men, and to suppose that they could immerse three thousand persons in five hours, is to invest them with supernatural physical energy—a supposition extravagant in the extreme. Indeed, the Baptists concede all this indirectly in their strenuous effort to prove that the "seventy disciples" assisted on this occasion. But the proof is all against them on this point also. In Luke x. we have an account of the call and commission of the "seventy," but no evidence that they were invested with authority to baptize; indeed, Christian baptism was not at this time introduced, and when it was originally introduced by Christ after his resurrection, authority to administer it was vested in the apostles only, by them to be transmitted to men whom they judged worthy to take the office of the ministry. "Lay hands suddenly on no man," was an apostolic injunction with reference to ordination. Now only ten days intervened between the commission of the apostles and the day of Pentecost, and Christ himself commanded them to suspend the exercise of all apostolic prerogative till the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: *but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*" Luke xxiv. 49. "And Christ being assembled together with them, commanded them *that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait*

for the promise of the Father—and ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Acts i. 4, 8. This power they received *on the day of Pentecost:* "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, *he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.*" Acts ii. 33. Now they were to go forth, "and teach all nations, *baptizing* them in the name, &c.—*beginning at Jerusalem.*" Matt. xxviii. 19. Luke xxiv. 47. *Before* this time, viz. the day of Pentecost, the *apostles themselves* had not received authority to open the Christian dispensation, and administer *baptism*, its initiating ordinance, and they received this authority themselves *by the baptism of the Holy Ghost:* "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Acts i. 5. Now as the apostles themselves had not authority to administer Christian baptism *before* the day of Pentecost, they certainly could not at this time confer this authority upon any one else, and we have no evidence that the apostles ordained any one to the work of the ministry during the ten days that intervened between their commission and the day of Pentecost. Matthias, it is true, was "numbered with the eleven apostles," *but he was selected by the Holy Ghost,* "that he might take part of *this* ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell." Acts i. 25. Matthias *only* then was added to "the eleven" to do the work of "teaching" and "*baptizing*" on the day of Pentecost. We have not one word of evidence that "the seventy" were ordained by the apostles to this work *on* the day of Pentecost; and not having been ordained to this work *before* the day of Pentecost, they could not assist the apostles in baptizing the "*three thousand.*" The supposition therefore that they did assist the apostles in this work, is unreasonable and untenable.

Secondly, we want a *suitable place* for the immersion of

so large a number. Neither at the temple, nor in any part of Jerusalem, was there a suitable place. The pool of Bethesda, which lay but a little to the north-east of the temple, and was used for cleansing the temple, the sacrifices, &c., and into which all the blood and offals and filth from the temple and sacrifices were washed, was unsuitable for immersing. Indeed, had it been a suitable place, it contained at this season of the year, when no rain fell, too little water for the immersion of three thousand persons in the five hours. Besides, had it been a suitable place, and had it contained water enough for the demand, the use of it could not have been obtained for the purpose of administering Christian baptism, for it was in the possession of the Jewish priests, the undisguised and mortal enemies of Christ, and who never could have been prevailed upon to surrender it to what they would have considered a most sacrilegious perversion from its original use. Moreover, had it been a suitable place, and had it contained an adequate amount of water for the demand, it is not presumable that the use of it could have been obtained by the apostles *at this time*, for the "evening sacrifice" came on between three and four o'clock in the afternoon, when the priests would have a sacred use for the pool themselves—*the very time* occupied by the apostles in baptizing. When, therefore, we take into consideration the nature of Bethesda, the season of the year, the prejudice of the priests, and the time of the day, Bethesda must be excluded as the place in which the three thousand were immersed, if they were immersed on the day of Pentecost.

The brook Kedron, or Cedron, flowed along the east side of the city, and was a turbid, unimportant stream, and always *dry* "except in winter." Jahn, § 19, p. 20. The winter in Palestine is over toward the close of February. But the three thousand were baptized in May or the be-

ginning of June; and hence they could not have been baptized in Kedron, unless they were baptized as the Israelites were in the Red Sea—on "*dry land.*" It was but a *brook*, not a large and noble river, and according to the best authority, "it is *dry* at least nine months in the year." Watson.

The only remaining water in or about Jerusalem, which the Baptists might suppose to have answered for the purpose of immersion, was the pool of Siloam, or Shiloah. This was rather a fountain that flowed at the base of Mount Moriah, between the city and the brook Kedron; and it is easy to see that a mere fountain is not adequate for the immersion of three thousand in five hours. Besides, this pool or fountain was *three-fourths of a mile* from where the apostles were teaching, and the people were assembled; and we have no evidence that the apostles and the multitude marched off to this fountain for the purpose of immersion. The "lavers in the temple" and "bathing-places in private houses" in the city, it has been contended, might have been used by the apostles on this occasion. Nothing can be conceived of more improbable than this. The concerted and malignant opposition of the priests would have baffled the apostles in the direction to the temple; besides, the priests themselves had a sacred use for the lavers at *the very time* the apostles were baptizing. Moreover, the lavers, had they been surrendered, were insufficient in number and size for the immersion of three thousand in five hours. And as to the "baths in private houses"—these were confined to the rich and honorable, *few* of whom were as yet friendly to the cause of Christ: and had they been tendered, it is inconceivable how baths enough could have been hunted up, and three thousand persons distributed and baptized in various parts of the city, by twelve persons, in five hours. And as to the river Jordan, it was sixteen or eighteen miles

distant from the city of Jerusalem, where all these persons were converted, and Jordan is out of the question this time at least.

Thirdly, there is not one fact stated in the sacred history of this solemn occasion, that furnishes the remotest inference that the three thousand were immersed; and therefore we may conclude that they were not immersed. Had the apostles laid the singular stress on the *mode* of baptism with which the Baptists invest it, they would certainly have specified it just as clearly as they have the great and important events of this occasion—especially as it was the opening of the Christian dispensation. But not one word on the subject of mode.

From all the circumstances of the case, we see immersion necessarily excluded, because it was absolutely impracticable. The only practicable mode was *affusion*, that is, sprinkling or pouring, and this, agreeably to a well-known Jewish custom, could have been done in a very short time by the apostles, with bunches of hyssop, as they passed through the multitude, and repeated the prescribed form of Christian baptism. All the difficulties above vanish upon the supposition that the three thousand were baptized by sprinkling or pouring, and therefore the inference is strongly in favor of these modes as the apostolic practice.

(2.) The multitudes baptized by John. The whole period of his ministry did not exceed ten months. Deduct from this period the time employed in preaching preparatory to baptizing each day; the time required in removing from place to place; occasional foul weather; forty-three Sabbaths, during which the Jews considered it unlawful to baptize,—and we shall have remaining for the exercise of John's ministry, in all, upon a fair calculation, two hundred and twenty-seven days. Now from calculations made, "John baptized in all about *three million* persons. The whole time engaged in

baptizing, as it is supposed, did not exceed *one thousand three hundred and sixty-two hours.* Therefore John must have baptized, in one hour, *two thousand two hundred and two;* in one minute, *thirty-six*, or a little over *one* in every two seconds. And he must have pursued these labors in the same rapid ratio during six hours per day, for the space of two hundred and twenty-seven days."[3] What physical strength would have been adequate to such labor for such a length of time? The practicability of baptizing by immersion, the "prodigious multitudes that flocked to John" for baptism, appeared to Robert Hall a great difficulty, which he could only remove by supposing, without a particle of Scripture testimony, that John was assisted by coadjutors. "It is by no means certain, however," says he, "that John was the only person who performed the ceremony; indeed, when we consider the prodigious multitudes, *it seems scarcely practicable;* he most probably employed coadjutors," &c.[4] Mr. Hall certainly knew that John did not abolish Jewish rites, and from his knowledge of Jewish rites, he might have found out a much easier mode of removing the difficulty, without the necessity of such assistance. We will direct the reader's attention to a Jewish rite, by which John, in so short a time, could have baptized three million persons by sprinkling or pouring. The task is easy. The reader must bear in mind that John was invested with no authority *to abolish* Jewish rites, and hence he adopted a Jewish custom on this occasion. "The Jews had a mode of purifying the people by dipping a bunch of hyssop into water, and sprinkling it on the people. So it is said of Moses, 'When he had spoken every precept to the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the

[3] Hibbard on Baptism—Mode, p. 23.

[4] Hall's Works, vol. i. 361.

people.'[5] Now, it is worthy of remark, that the people, at this time, numbered *six hundred thousand* warriors, which, reckoning five of the common people to one warrior, leaves a round number of three millions of persons. These Moses sprinkled. The occasion was the most sublime and imposing recorded in the Old Testament. But if Moses dedicated the people to God by sprinkling, and if such forms of consecration were familiar to the Jews, and if John adopted a Jewish rite for the purpose of his ministry, then, evidently, we may suppose he sprinkled the people with a hyssop branch dipped in the water."[6] Mr. Wesley is of the same opinion. "It seems that they stood in ranks on the edge of the river, and John, passing along before them, cast water on their heads or faces, by which means he might baptize many thousands in a day."[7] On this ground, therefore, we conclude that the immense multitudes who were baptized by John, might receive the ordinance with comparatively little labor and trouble; indeed, on this ground only, in so short a time, could one man initiate three million of Jews under the new dispensation.

(3.) The third case is that of the jailer.

First. We want *time*, upon the supposition that he was immersed. The earthquake came *at midnight*—and alarmed, awakened, and converted, the jailer is baptized "*straightway*," that is, "in *the same hour* of the night." (Ver. 33.) Preliminary to his baptism, a short time is employed in instructing him, "for they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house"—*οἰκία*. (Ver. 32.) "And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes," (ver. 33,)—some time was required for this. Upon being roused from sleep, and examining the prison

[5] Heb. ix. 19.

[6] Hibbard on Baptism—Mode, pp. 25, 26.

[7] Notes, Matt. iii. 6.

doors, and "seeing them open," and "calling for a light," and "bringing out Paul and Silas" from the "inner prison," he must have consumed more time. And after all this, what portion of the "*hour*" had the apostles to go out with the jailer, and his whole family, in search of a river, or brook, or pond, or any place suitable for immersion?

But, secondly, admitting that there was time enough for immersion, is it probable that the jailer would have gone out of the prison, leaving "all the doors opened, and every one's bands loosed," (ver. 26,) so that all the prisoners might attempt to escape under cover of the night? Such a supposition is not consistent with the prudence and integrity of the new convert.

Or, thirdly, is it probable that the jailer and his family, upon leaving the prison with the apostles, could hope to elude the guard that surrounded the building, now excited to the utmost vigilance by the earthquake?

Or, fourthly, is it probable that Paul and Silas would have connived at a violation of duty on the part of the jailer, and thus exposed him to death, the penalty of the violation? According to the Roman law the jailer would have forfeited his life had he taken the prisoners out of the prison. And thus, when he supposed the prisoners gone, he drew his sword, and was about to kill himself, when Paul, acquainted with the Roman law, exclaimed, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here."

Or, fifthly, is it probable that Paul and Silas would have connived at the violation of the plain principles of the gospel in reference to such cases, and which Paul himself has stated so clearly? "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist

shall receive to themselves damnation."[8] "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities, and powers, to obey magistrates," &c.[9]

Or, sixthly, is it probable that Paul and Silas would have been *accomplices* in the violation of the laws of God and man?

Or, seventhly, is it probable that Paul and Silas stole out clandestinely at midnight, when the next day they refused to depart "privily?" Would it have been consistent with the character of the noble and upright Paul, to have left the prison at midnight, in a dishonorable manner, and the next day demand as his right that he be dismissed in an honorable manner? Would such insincerity have been in character with the dignity and purity of an apostle?

Or, eighthly, regarding all the circumstances as unfavorable to immersion *out* the jail, is it probable that the jailer and all his family were immersed *in* the jail? Is it probable, that among the wretched accommodations of a Roman jail, there were large pools, or convenient bathing vessels, which might be used for the purpose of immersion? And as to "a *private* bath in the jail"—the old and convenient hypothesis—Philippi was in latitude 41° north—"a climate in which baths are little used," except by persons in the "possession of the luxuries of wealth." That there was a private bath in the jail is altogether hypothetical—that one was in the possession of the jailer is wholly improbable. And add to all these the improbability that the jailer and all his family, roused suddenly from sleep, were, either *in* or *out* of the jail, *immersed* at *midnight*, specially the *females*, if there were any, greatly to the inconvenience of all the parties concerned, the detriment of their health, an offence to modesty, and a work of hurry and confusion inconsistent with the solemn

[8] Rom. xiii. 1, 2. [9] Titus iii. 1.

administration of the ordinances of Christianity—and immersion in the case of the jailer and his family, is totally out of the question. But all these difficulties in the way of his baptism will vanish if we admit that it was done by sprinkling or pouring, which might have been done with a part of the water with which he "washed their stripes," for in *the very hour* he washed their stripes, he was baptized: "And he took them *the same hour* of the night, and *washed* their stripes, and was *baptized*, he and all his, *straightway*" —*immediately—on the spot.* (Ver. 33.) The conclusion is inevitable, that the jailer and his family were not only baptized within the prison, but that the mode of baptism adopted by the apostles was either sprinkling or pouring.[10]

(4.) The next case we shall notice is the baptism of Cornelius and his friends. In this case there is no *specific* reference made to any mode of baptism, and immersion is wholly out of the question.

First. The sole design in recording this case is to show the progress of Christianity among *the Gentiles.* Cornelius and his friends were *Gentiles*, and first converted to God, under the preaching of Peter, and thus having become members of Christ's mystical body, they were entitled to formal initiation into the Christian church. Hence, Peter inquires, "Can any man forbid *water*, that these should *not be baptized*, which have received the Holy Ghost *as well as we?*"

[10] Dr. A. Clark observes respecting the baptism of the jailer: "And by the way, if *he and all his were baptized straightway, immediately, instantly*, at that very time, *dum ipsa res agitur*, it is by no means likely that there was any immersion in the case; indeed, all the circumstances of the case, the dead of the night, the general agitation, the necessity of despatch, and the words of the text, all disprove it. The apostles, therefore, had another method of administering baptism besides *immersion*, which, if practised according to the Jewish formalities, must have required considerable time, and not a little publicity." Commentary, note, Acts xvi. 32.

Acts x. 47. That is, Christ the founder of the Christian church, has instituted *water baptism* as the sensible formal initiatory rite into the Christian church: these Gentiles have received the Holy Ghost as well as we Jews have: they have therefore as good a right to association with the Christian church as we Jews have: can *any man* therefore, whether Jew or Gentile, forbid that they should be baptized, or deny them the right to enjoy, with us Jews, the privileges of the Christian church, since they give the most satisfactory proof that they are the subjects of regenerating grace, and are recognised by God himself as already associated with us in the *spiritual* church of Christ? for "while Peter yet spake, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word," (ver. 44,) and "they heard *them speak with tongues, and magnify God.*" (Ver. 46.) At this the *Jews* were astonished, for it was a maxim with the Jews that the *shechinah*, or Divine Spirit, could not be communicated to the *Gentiles:* "and they of the *circumcision* (Jews) which believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, *because that on the Gentiles* ALSO *was poured the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" (Ver. 45.) "*Then* answered Peter, can any man forbid *water*, that *these* should *not* be *baptized*,"—should not be formally initiated into the Christian church,—"who have received the Holy Ghost, *as well as we?*"—who have *as good* a title to *baptism* as *we* have? "And he commanded them to be *baptized*"—to be formally and sacramentally recognised as members of the Christian church. (Ver. 48.) That this is the proper interpretation of this case is evident from the subsequent chapter, which begins: "And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea *heard* that the *Gentiles* had *also* received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the *circumcision* (Jews) *contended with him*, saying, Thou wentest in to men *uncircumcised*," &c. (xi. 1–3.) Peter then goes

into a defence of the whole proceeding, and thus concludes: "Forasmuch then as God gave *them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus; what was I, that I could withstand God?* When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God, ALSO TO THE GENTILES, *granted repentance unto life.*" (Ver. 17, 18.) Peter then did right in baptizing the Gentile believers, because the gospel extended to the Gentiles as well as Jews. This is the great doctrine taught in the *baptism* of Cornelius and his friends, and this is the sole design contemplated in recording their baptism.

Secondly. As to the *mode* of baptism in this case, there is not the remotest allusion to *immersion*. No preparations are made to leave the spot—no proposition is made to do so—no preparations are made for immersion on the spot—no public pool, or pond, or fountain, or river, or private bath, is referred to—no "watery grave" is mentioned—no reference is made even to *water*, except to the possibility that some might "forbid" the use of it in Christian baptism;—and consequently, in the absence of all the circumstances favorable to immersion, *we cannot infer that immersion was practised on this occasion.*

Thirdly. The force of inference is opposed to immersion. Peter was now *in* the house of Cornelius. "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by a holy angel, to send for *thee into his house,*" &c.[11] "And as Peter was *coming in*, Cornelius met him," &c. (x. 25.) "And as he talked with him, *he went in*," &c. (Ver. 27.) *In* the house, then, Peter preached; and, *in* the house, *as he preached*, Cornelius and his friends were converted; and "*then*," *in the house, at the time*, "he com-

[11] Acts x. 22.

manded them to be baptized," and the inference is, that they were baptized *on the spot*, by sprinkling or pouring. All the known circumstances at least are in favor of these modes of baptism, while they present singular difficulties to the theory of exclusive immersion.

Fourthly. If the phrase, "can any man *forbid water*, that these should not be baptized," implies that *immersion* was intended, then it proves too much for the Baptists; for they assume that immersion was universally enjoined and practised by the apostles. Why then was it supposed by Peter that "*any*" would object to *immersion* on *this* occasion? But "*the apostles* and brethren in Judea," as we have seen, did, at first, object to the baptism of Cornelius and his friends—therefore, on the hypothesis of the Baptists, "*the apostles*" *themselves* objected to *immersion* as the *mode* of baptism in the case before us!—a conclusion which the Baptists cannot escape, unless they adopt the interpretation we have given above; and if they adopt that—and they cannot reject it consistently with a fundamental doctrine of the Bible—they relinquish all hope to support immersion from the baptism of Cornelius and his friends.

(5.) The next instance we shall notice is that of Saul of Tarsus. As in the case of Cornelius and his friends, there is not a single circumstance connected with the baptism of Saul of Tarsus in favor of immersion, but all to the contrary. The simple scriptural account is to be analyzed.

First. It is probable that he was baptized *in the house* of Judas. "And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire *in the house* of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth."[12] Here Ananias finds him: "And Ananias went his way, and *entered into the house;* and putting his hands

[12] Acts ix. 11.

on him, said," &c. (Ver. 17.) It is to be remembered that Paul had not eaten nor drunk any thing for three days: "and he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." (Ver. 9.) And so Ananias finds him lying down, and in a state of extreme debility. It is improbable therefore that, in this state of debility, he left the house for the purpose of being immersed; and we may rationally infer that he was baptized *in the house*, which inferentially excludes immersion.

Secondly. It is improbable that, in this state of debility, he was immersed at all. Prudence would have suggested delay at least till he should have recovered strength adequate to the process of immersion. But he is baptized the same day.

Thirdly. It is stated, "He *arose* and was baptized"—properly, "he *standing up*—*ἀναστας*—was baptized." Not, that "he arose," *went out*, sought a stream, and was "buried in a *watery grave*;" but that he *stood up, in the house, and was baptized*—a simple statement that justifies the inference that, in his weakened state, occasioned by a long and rigid fast, unable to *leave the house*, and too feeble to bear plunging in water *in the house*, he was baptized on the spot by sprinkling or pouring water on his head. This word is the second indefinite participle from the verb *anistemi*, and, in the Acts of the Apostles, is translated twice, *arise*—eight times, *arose*—and four times, *stood up*. It never conveys the idea of motion *from a place*, but the action of *rising up*, or *standing*—nothing more; and as no word is employed with it signifying that Paul left the house, the inference is clear that Paul was *standing* on his feet when he was baptized, which utterly excludes the idea of immersion, and favors that of perfusion.

(6.) The last case we shall notice, is 1 Peter iii. 20, 21: "The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight

souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." We shall dismiss this objection with a few words.

First. The apostle at a single stroke destroys the argument of all who contend for mere *mode*, or the quantity of the water, or the physical effect of water, as essential to baptism. "*Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh*"—not the *letter*, but the *substance*—not the *act*, but the *thing signified* by baptism, saves us. 2. *Immersion*, as a mode of baptism, cannot be intended in this passage as saving; for Noah and those with him floated in the ark *above* the waters. 3. Immersion in this case proved fatal to the antediluvians, as in the case of the Egyptians in the Red Sea. 4. Immersion was the very evil from which the ark effected deliverance. 5. If the mode of baptism may be inferred from this passage, it must be *sprinkling*, for the ark was borne *on the surface* of the water, and *sprinkled* with the rain that fell from heaven. 6. Wherever baptism is referred to in the Scriptures, in connection with water or not, the Baptists invariably find immersion. John is found at Jordan—therefore he immersed. John is found "*beyond* Jordan"—therefore he immersed. John is found at Enon—therefore he immersed. John baptized "*with* water"—therefore he immersed. The twelve apostles baptized three thousand persons in Jerusalem, the same day—therefore they were immersed. The jailer was baptized in the jail—therefore he was immersed. Both Philip and the eunuch went down into, and came up out of the water—therefore one, and not the other, was immersed. Lydia was baptized at a prayer-meeting—therefore she was immersed. Cornelius was baptized *in* his house—therefore he was immersed. Saul was baptized *in* the house of Judas —therefore he was immersed. "We are buried by baptism

into *death*"—therefore we are to be immersed. The Israelites were "baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea"—therefore they were immersed—though they were on "*dry land.*" And so Noah and those with him were immersed—though the ark floated at the time *on the water*, and was *sprinkled* by the rain that fell from heaven. In all these examples, *the fact* of baptism is all that is intended or is important; the mode is non-essential, and is a matter of inference, and consequently altogether optional with the subject of baptism.

We have omitted in this category the case of the eunuch, since we have considered it at length in the preceding parts of this work.

Fifthly. Among collateral proofs in favor of sprinkling and pouring, may be mentioned the disposition of the Baptists to make a new version of the Bible, in the translation of *βαπτίζω*. This is an open confession that the advantage fairly obtained from the word, as it stands in our translation, is not satisfactory to them, though they say, "any one who reads can understand." Why then desire to change it? Are immersionists the only *clear-headed* and *honest* men in the world? Will they not admit, that there are others besides themselves who are possessed of classic knowledge sufficient to examine and translate the original Greek and Hebrew, and of *moral honesty too, to publish their convictions to the world? Why then change the translation?* Pardon me, my brethren. Luther wished the Epistle of James torn out of the Bible and burned up, because it opposed his doctrine of faith *without* works; but afterward, when he was taught better, he admitted the genuineness and acknowledged the authority of this epistle. Mr. Jewett, a clergyman who left the Presbyterian Church and joined the Baptists, says, in a book published by him on baptism—"Had the translators of our version possessed the light

which the labors of eminent philologists during the last fifty years have thrown over this subject, they would have found themselves obliged, in conscience, to translate the word *baptizo, immerse,* in all cases; and they would not have consented to adopt it, instead of translating it, thus concealing the mind of the Spirit. Nay, more, had not King James, under the advice of the bishops, virtually ordered the translators not to translate the words relating to baptism, I believe it morally certain that that learned and pious assembly, acting even under the inferior light which they enjoyed, would have rendered the word in every instance in accordance with the views maintained in this discourse."[13] In the first place, this opinion is wholly gratuitous. Secondly, it is an unmerited reflection upon the intelligence and moral honesty of the translators, King James, and the bishops. And in the third place, this reflection is made by an ordinary man, who has written a small book on baptism, made up principally of quotations and opinions from authors on the subject, a thousand times refuted; and consequently involving in principle the reputation of his own book long before it appeared.

If the Baptists should succeed in changing our good old English version, they ought also to change their own name from "Baptists" to "Immersionists," and to surrender a name of which they have boasted ever since their origin. For unless they should change their name, to correspond to the new version, their heathen converts would inquire, what does this mean? You are Baptists, why are you not called Immersionists? And then if they should change their name, their heathen converts would find out, that for a long time, they were called Baptists, and would inquire, why was the original name "Baptists" ever changed, if it was clear that "*baptizo*" meant to immerse?

[13] Third ed. p. 61.

Sixthly. Among collateral proofs in favor of sprinkling and pouring, may be mentioned also the disposition of immersionists to destroy the argument from analogy between the baptism of the Holy Ghost and external baptism, by denying and attempting to disprove the baptism of the Holy Ghost altogether.[14] This effort clearly proves, that the force of analogy between the two modes is unfavorable to the views of the Baptists. For why assail so boldly a fundamental doctrine of salvation—the baptism of the Holy Ghost—if there is no resemblance between the modes of spiritual and water baptisms? This daring adventure is an admission equivalent to a triumphant argument in favor of the validity of sprinkling and pouring, while it displays a reckless presumption in the professed friends of the Bible, surpassed only by the intolerant and inveterate opposition of the avowed and insidious enemies of the Cross.

CHAPTER VI.

UNFAIRNESS OF THE BAPTISTS.

We continue the examination of the collateral proofs in favor of sprinkling and pouring as the most proper modes of baptism.

Seventhly. Almost all the learning and piety of the Christian church, from the days of the apostles to the present time, have advocated and practised the modes of sprinkling and pouring, and opposed the doctrine of *exclusive* immersion. This argument is accumulative in its strength; and as time refutes error and confirms the truth, we may regard the

[14] This remark has reference principally to the Campbellites—a miserable heresy, to which we shall refer again hereafter.

testimony of the church for eighteen hundred years as substantial ground for the continuation of the practice of sprinkling and pouring at the present time. Not a fiftieth part of all the Protestants in the world believe in the *exclusiveness* of immersion; and Dr. Kurtz, of the Lutheran Church, says, "probably not *one-sixtieth* part practise immersion." The Baptists sometimes claim the practice of the Greek church in favor of their views, and yet the Greek Church practises *trine* immersion, and maintains that baptism in this form is absolutely necessary. Besides, after these immersions, they *sprinkle* the subject. So that, in no respect, can the Greek Church be adduced in support of the claims of the Baptists.

Let me here correct one of the most captivating, insidious, and extensive impositions ever invented and inflicted on the human mind—one, to a great extent, without question, a fruitful means in causing doubtful minds to settle down finally upon the *exclusiveness* of immersion—an imposition, therefore, to which may be ascribed much of the success of the Baptist Church in obtaining accessions to her numbers and influence, in all parts of the land where she can impose upon those who are destitute both of the discrimination and information necessary to baffle the well-contrived design. The imposition is this:—The Baptists, in quoting the opinions of the church on the subject of the mode of baptism, very often adduce pædobaptist authors, divines, and commentators, as witnesses in favor of immersion; and in doing this, they confound the admissions of the validity of immersion as *a* valid mode, with concessions in favor of immersion as *the only* valid mode. Nay more; they ingeniously blend the admission of pædobaptist authors, divines, and commentators, with their own bold assumption that immersion was *the only* mode of baptism practised by the apostles and the primitive church.

Why do the Baptists, in quoting pædobaptist authorities, keep back a part of their opinions, and triumphantly exhibit that part which admits the validity of immersion merely as a valid mode? Why do they keep their congregations in ignorance on this subject? Was there ever a more flagrant injustice imposed on the public mind? Let me state the case clearly, openly, and fully. The authorities, ancient and modern, with some exceptions, admit that immersion was *an* apostolic mode of baptism, but at the same time they maintain that it was not *the* only apostolic mode; the Baptists maintain that it was the only apostolic mode: in this they differ. The authorities support infant baptism as an apostolic practice; the Baptists do not: in this they differ. The authorities oppose "close communion;" the Baptists maintain and practise it: in this they differ. And in many other respects, the authorities and the Baptists differ as materially as in those we have mentioned. Now what have we here? Why, the Baptist Church standing alone; not only unsustained, but opposed, in many respects, by all the authorities of the church from the days of Christ till the present time; and especially unsupported, and even opposed, in her interpretation of the meaning of the word *baptizo*, by the pædobaptist churches, divines, commentators, classic scholars, and the most respectable lexicographers, with but a few exceptions, in all ages of the Christian era. To be governed entirely by the authorities, the Baptists must adopt the other modes of baptism also: otherwise they are *against* them. This is a fair view of the whole case; and it is clear that our Baptist brethren, in this matter, deal very unfairly with the authorities, with sister churches, with their own congregations, and with *you*, who, at this time, with deep solicitude, are forming your opinions on the whole weight of evidence in support of Christian baptism.

Nor is this all. Almost all the authorities quoted by

the Baptists, so far from supporting their exclusiveness on the subject of baptism, have written expressly against it Scarcely a pædobaptist author of eminence has existed since the origin of the Baptist Church, who has not made the most strenuous *opposition* to the very tenet which is the peculiarity of that church, and which distinguishes it from the rest of the Christian churches. Many large volumes might be compiled from the works of pædobaptists, which would not only furnish their unqualified testimony on this subject, but, as we believe, would effectually overthrow the pretensions of the Baptists to *exclusiveness* in administering the sacraments. Let the opinions of a few represent the rest.

Wall assures us that the first body of men of which we find any account, who denied baptism to infants, were the Petrobrussians, a sect of the Albigenses, in the former part of the twelfth century. Milner affirms, "a few instances excepted, the existence of the anti-pædobaptists seems scarcely to have taken place in the church of Christ, till a little after the beginning of the Reformation." Calvin declares "that the *substance* of baptism being retained, the church, from the beginning, enjoyed the liberty of using somewhat *different* rites." With regard to infant baptism, Dr. Doddridge says, "no argument can be drawn from these words [the great commission] to the prejudice of infant baptism." Professor Stuart, after having at large considered the subject of sprinkling as compared with immersion, and proved that the former is equally as proper as the latter, concludes with the following remarks on infant baptism:— "I have only to say, that I believe in both the propriety and expediency of the rite thus administered, and therefore accede to it *ex animo*. Commands, or plain and certain examples, in the *New* Testament relative to it, I do not find. Nor, with my views of it, do I need them. If the subject

had reference to what is fundamental or essential, in Christianity, then I must find either the one or the other in order to justify adopting or practising it. But as the case now stands, the *general analogy* of the ancient dispensation; the enlargement of privilege under the gospel; the silence of the New Testament on the subject of receiving children into a special relation to the church by the baptismal rite, which shows, at least, that there was no dispute in the early ages relative to this matter; the certainty that in Tertullian's days the practice was general; all these considerations put together—united with the conviction that baptism is a *symbol* and *dedication*, and may be so in the case of infants as well as adults, and that it brings parents and children into a peculiar relation to the church, and under peculiarly recognised obligations—serve to *satisfy me fully* that the practice *may be* and *should be continued.*" Is it not surprising that the Rev. James D. Knowles, professor in the Newton Theological Institution, and many others with him, should, notwithstanding this clear statement of his views respecting the modes and subjects of baptism, present Professor Stuart to the world as a witness in favor of *exclusive* immersion? Professor Knowles quotes the language of Professor Stuart as follows:—"After citing the testimony of many ancient writers, Professor Stuart says: 'But enough. It is, says Augusti, "a thing made out," viz. the ancient practice of immersion. So indeed all the writers who have thoroughly investigated the subject conclude. I know of no one usage of ancient times which seems to be more clearly and certainly made out.' I cannot see how it is possible for any candid person who examines the subject to deny this." Here is not one word in favor of the *exclusiveness* of the Baptists. Professor Stuart admits that immersion was *a* mode, but not *the only* mode of baptism practised by the primitive church; for he goes on to prove, with equal clear-

ness, that *sprinkling* also was equally valid, and that infant baptism was proper, and obligatory on the Christian church. Professor Stuart does not attempt to prove, as the Baptists do, that immersion is a positive institution enjoined by Christ and his apostles, but his design is to vindicate the occasional practice of immersion by the pædobaptist church from primitive times, through all succeeding ages to the present time, and thus to establish the admissibility of immersion as a baptismal ceremony of the Christian dispensation. The admission of the validity of a ceremony should not be distorted into an acknowledgment of its exclusiveness, however anciently it may have been practised.

Pendleton, in his work on "Baptism and Communion," represents Professor Stuart as saying that *baptizo* "means *only* immerse, overwhelm." "It is worthy of remark," says he, "that Professor Stuart, throughout the Greek classics and the Septuagint, assigns to the word *baptizo* only immerse, overwhelm," p. 30. We will refute this gross misrepresentation of the Baptists by referring to the work of Professor Ripley, himself a Baptist, who reviewed Professor Stuart's essay on the "Mode of Baptism," published in the Biblical Repository, April, 1833. He quotes (p. 26) Professor Stuart, as follows: "5.—*To wash, cleanse by water*, where *βαπτίζω* is used;" and observes, (p. 33,] "the method by which Professor Stuart would show that *βαπτίζω* here means *to cleanse by water*, is liable to objection;" and continues, (p. 34,) "I cannot regard the statement as sufficiently sustained, that *βαπτίζω* in the Septuagint and Apocrypha means simply *to wash, to cleanse by water*, without containing any reference to the manner, or the extent of the washing." Here then, according to Professor Ripley, Professor Stuart did *not* restrict the meaning of *βαπτίζω* to "immerse, overwhelm," as is asserted by Mr. Pendleton. Again, Professor Ripley, (p. 55,) quotes Professor Stuart: "We have also

seen in Nos. 2, 5, 6, of examples from the Septuagint and Apocrypha, that the word *baptizo* sometimes means to *wash. There is then no absolute certainty from usage, that the word, when applied to designate the* RITE OF BAPTISM, *means of course to immerse or plunge.*" This is conclusive.

We invite attention to the unfairness of Mr. Booth, in his book entitled "Pædobaptism Examined," in which he has made quotations from nearly a *hundred* pædobaptist authors to support the tenet of exclusive immersion. We shall examine his work by the chapter.

(1.) His quotations from at least *twenty* learned Pædobaptist authors on the subject of *positive institutions*, prove nothing at all on the subject of the *mode* of baptism, since not one of these quotations was designed by its author to bear in the remotest degree upon the *mode* of baptism. Mr Booth argues from the important principles of positive institutions to the *mode* of baptism, *inferring*, that the authors he quoted had reference to the *mode* of baptism; and thus his "seven reflections" that follow are nothing more than *false inferences* of his own, and palpable perversions of his authors.

(2.) He next adduces the testimonies of *eighty-two* authors, concerning the signification of the terms *baptize* and *baptism.* In the outset, he is forced in candor to forewarn his readers that "no inconsiderable part of his authors assert that the word baptize signifies POURING and SPRINKLING, as well as immersion." And he admits at the same time that these authors "may be justly numbered among the first literary characters that any age has produced," and consequently were fully capable of judging correctly in the premises. Consequently, the authorities adduced do not support the dogma of *exclusive* immersion.

(3.) His next step is to adduce *seventy-five* testimonies from pædobaptist authors in proof of *the design* of baptism.

Not one of these authors bears testimony that the design of baptism can be expressed or set forth only by immersion, nor do they all admit the validity of immersion as *a mode* by which the design of baptism may be set forth. Indeed, in some instances, immersion is not even mentioned or referred to, as in the testimony of Chamierus: "they who are baptized represent the death of Christ, and at the same time their own." Mr. Booth supposed Chamierus used the term "baptized" synonymously with *immersion;* and Chamierus is in part wrong, for the eucharist represents the death of Christ. And in other instances, *sprinkling* is mentioned as answering the design of baptism, as in the testimony of Surretinus: "As now persons to be baptized are SPRINKLED with water; so they are sprinkled with the blood and spirit of Christ to the washing away of sin." All the quotations made by Mr. Booth from pædobaptist authors prove nothing in favor of exclusive immersion, and whenever Mr. Booth differs from his authorities, as he does in many instances, of course they are to be regarded as against him.

(4.) He next adduces *ninety-six* testimonies to prove that the apostolic mode of baptism was immersion. He commences this chapter also with a candid confession: ["N. B.—*Candor* demands that we should here acknowledge that though these numerous and learned authors have expressed themselves in the following manner, yet many of them insist upon it as highly probable that the APOSTLES DID SOMETIMES administer baptism by POURING or SPRINKLING."] Ordinary candor could not have made a better confession, and this confession is fatal to the doctrine of *exclusive* immersion. Besides, most of those authors whom Mr. B. adduces in proof that the apostolic mode of baptism was immersion, and who, as he admits, affirm that the apostles did sometimes administer baptism by *pouring* or *sprinkling*, are also the very authors whom he adduced in the preceding

chapter to prove that the design of baptism could be fully set forth *only by immersion!* And thus as these authors bear testimony also for sprinkling and pouring, they of course maintain that the design of baptism may be represented by these modes. Not one of these authors bears testimony to the divine institution of immersion as the only proper mode of baptism.

(5.) In the fifth chapter, he refers to the present practice of "the Greek and oriental churches, in regard to the mode" of baptism. But some of his witnesses bear testimony also to the practice of INFANT BAPTISM, as Hasselquist: "The Greeks christen their *children* immediately after their birth," &c. And Anonymous: "The Muscovite priests plunge their CHILDREN *three times* over head and ears in water." And one of these witnesses bears testimony to *trine* immersion as the "primitive manner." "9. Dr. J. G. King: The Greek church uniformly practises the trine immersion, undoubtedly the most primitive manner." Here Mr. Booth himself admits the authority of this testimony to the prevalence of infant baptism, for "*thirteen centuries;*" so that in his eagerness to prove immersion as the apostolic mode, he likewise adduces proof to support the apostolic authority of infant baptism, and thus at a single stroke overthrows the *Baptist* Church—for *where was the Baptist Church all this time?*

(6.) He next endeavors to prove from the same sources, that "the design of baptism is more fully expressed by immersion, than by pouring or sprinkling." Then it is obvious, on his own admission, that pouring or sprinkling expresses, in some degree, at least, the design of baptism. Mr. Booth's witnesses are the same good old authors he adduced in the preceding chapters—every one of whom is an advocate for sprinkling and pouring as proper modes of baptism, and Dr. Wall, one of his authors, has written the most powerful

defence of infant baptism ever known among uninspired writers.

(7.) He attempts to explain "the reasons, rise, and prevalence of pouring or sprinkling, instead of immersion." And here the following things are obvious. First. Sprinkling or pouring was admitted in certain cases of sickness, feebleness, and in cold countries, as Mr. Booth's witnesses testify. Secondly. His witnesses likewise prove, by the same quotations, the validity of infant baptism. Thirdly. One of his witnesses, Dr. Manton, declares that "Christianity lieth not in ceremonies; the principal thing in baptism is the *washing* away of sin, that may be done by POURING on of water, AS WELL AS dipping." Another witness, Walaeus, declares that "the ancients, in cold climates, generally used *aspersion:* because a ceremony *that is free* ought always to give way to charity." Fourthly. He argues, because "infants cannot bear plunging, without the hazard of health and life, it is presumptive argument against their claim to the ordinance of baptism." Upon the same ground adults, in feeble health, have no claim to the ordinance. The principle that can be compromised on account of physical weakness in adults, can be compromised for the same reason in the case of infants: admit sprinkling as valid, and the difficulty vanishes in both cases. But Mr. B. himself removes this objection to infant baptism, by quotations from medical and philosophical men, attesting that cold ablutions are not objectionable on account of infantile weakness.

The *second part* of his examination of pædobaptism treats of "the subjects of baptism," and this we shall also consider by the chapter.

(1.) His *thirty-one* quotations to prove that there is "neither express precept, nor plain example, for pædobaptism, in the New Testament," are nothing more than bold

and gross mutilations of the arguments of their authors *in favor* of infant baptism.

(2.) He asserts that there is "no evidence of pædobaptism before the latter end of the second, or the beginning of the third century," and adduces twelve witnesses to prove it—*not one of whom lived in the first three centuries of the Christian era.* He passes over in cautious silence all the Fathers of this period, all of whom bear positive or indirect testimony to the apostolic authority and validity of infant baptism. Moreover, in the preceding chapter of his work, he had quoted largely from a multitude of authors to prove the primitive authority and the general prevalence of immersion—often intermingling at the same time their testimonies in favor of infant baptism, and yet it is surprising, that he overlooked the fact that the same witnesses are as credible in the one case as in the other. And when it suits him, he argues against his faithful authorities! They are credible, when they testify in his favor—not credible, when they oppose him! In a former chapter, Dr. Wall was paraded with his hosts of witnesses for the truth—now he is singled out as his antagonist! And why? Because he admits Irenæus, and other Fathers of the church, in proof of the early antiquity, and apostolic origin of infant baptism! He cries out, "Is it not strange, is it not quite unaccountable, that such ambiguous words as those of Irenæus should be considered by our opponents as the most explicit of any on record, in proof that pædobaptism was practised so early as the year 180?" And yet but a few pages after, in considering the testimony of Origen, he without hesitation "allows" that the "passages" adduced from his writings "*are plain and express to the point.*" Indeed, such is the course of argument pursued by Mr. Booth throughout his book, that by an analogical method, one might prove from the Bible that to murder is a divine command: "Cain rose

up against Abel his brother, and slew him"—"Go thou and do likewise." But after all, his witnesses prove that infant baptism was prevalent in the latter end of the second century, and he admits that "the practice of infant baptism did prevail in the latter part of the third century."

(3.) In the third and last chapter, he adduces several testimonies in proof of "the high opinion of the Fathers, concerning the utility of baptism"—and many of his witnesses, such as Luther, Gerhardus, Buddeus, Deylingius, Vossius, and Dr. Fiddes, bear testimony to the efficacy of baptism in the salvation of INFANTS.

Mr. Booth pursues just such a course, in his "Pædobaptism Examined," as a certain Danvers in England pursued in his "Treatise on Baptism," which was replied to by Mr. Walker. The course pursued by Danvers is censured by Dr. Wall in the following very just and strong language—and every word of it is applicable to the author of "Pædobaptism Examined." "Here by the way," says Dr. Wall, "I cannot but take notice how much trouble such an adventurous author as this Danvers is able to give to such a careful and exact answerer as Mr. Walker. Danvers does in this place deal with above twenty other writers after the same rate as he does with the two I mentioned, viz. Scapula, Stephanus, Pasor, Vossius, Leigh, Casaubon, Beza, Chamier, Hammond, Cajetan, Musculus, Piscator, Calvin, Keckerman, Diodatus, Grotius, Davenant, Tilenus, Dr. Cave, Wall, Strabo, and Tillotson. Mr. Walker shows that he has *abused every one of them;* by affixing to some of them words they never said, by adding to others, by altering and mistranslating others, and by curtailing the words of the rest."[1]

Respecting the unfairness of the Baptists in adducing the distorted testimony of pædobaptist writers in proof of the

[1] Wall, vol. ii. 408, 409.

practice of the primitive church, Dr. Wall himself had occasion to observe in his History of Infant Baptism: "This I have seen done," says he, "a hundred times, when the same author that is quoted does sometimes in the same treatise, and sometimes in other parts of his works, show that infants are to be baptized, as being in a case that is exempt from the general rule that requires faith, prayer, epentance, and other personal preparations."[2] This injustice he experienced at the hand of Mr. Gale, in his "Reflections" on his work. To which, "Dr. Wall," in his "Defence," replies: "After a smoothing compliment, he in the next words sets up against me one of the falsest accusations and most abominable calumnies that in all the seventy years of my life was ever thrown upon me by any lewd or slanderous tongue or pen. He makes me a teacher of a false doctrine, contrary to the principles of the church of which I am a member, and contrary to what I have always taught therein, and contrary to what I declare in many places of the book he had before him. A doctrine that was never maintained by any Christian [beside the antipædobaptists themselves] but by some late papists; viz. that I 'freely allow that it cannot be made to appear from the Scriptures that infants are to be baptized.' I have been forced by this foul and importunate cavil to look over those places of my own book where I do *enforce the proof of infant baptism from several texts of Scripture.* I did bring many proofs from God's word, which stand as so many evidences of the falsehood of this false charge against me. Of his untruths, I would beforehand instance in one flagrant and manifest one (which, as I shall show, he has affirmed above twenty times over) his saying, that I have in my book yielded and owned that there is *no Scripture proof* for infant baptism;

[2] Vol. i. 328.

though near half his book be spent in refuting (as well as he can) *those proofs* which I brought from Scripture."[3]

One more remark on the unfairness of Mr. Jewett. He quotes Calvin in proof of the declaration, "that none but believers are entitled to baptism."[4] He thus refers to Calvin: "Calvin. Because Christ required teaching before baptizing, and will have believers only admitted to baptism, baptism does not seem to be rightly administered, except faith precede." Calvin, in this quotation, is referring to *adult* baptism, in which case faith must "precede" baptism. But on the subject of infant baptism—and certainly infants cannot "believe"—he observes, "as some turbulent spirits in the present age have raised fierce disputes, which still continue to agitate the church, on the subject of infant baptism, I cannot refrain from adding some observations with a view to repress their violence."[5] And he adds, that those who affirm that infant baptism was unknown till a long time after the resurrection of Christ, "*therein lie most abominably; for there is no writer so ancient that doth not certainly refer the beginning thereof to the age of the apostles.*" We bid Mr. Jewett adieu—for the present.

We proceed next to the vindication of Mr. Wesley, who has often been adduced in proof of the dogma of exclusive immersion. Copious extracts from his works we now lay before the reader. "I made an end of visiting the classes," says he, "miserably shattered by showers of strange doctrine. At one I preached at Tipton Green, where the *Baptists* also have been making havoc of the flock, which constrained me, in speaking on these words, 'Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins,' to spend some ten minutes in controversy, which is more than I had done in pub-

[3] Wall, vol. iv. 66, 175–177.
[4] Jewett on Baptism, p. 102.
[5] Insts. b. iv. c. 16, sec. 1.
[6] Wesley's Works, vol. iii. 510

lic for many months (perhaps years) before."[6] And so it seems Mr. Wesley, as well as Calvin, met with "turbulent spirits who agitated" the church on the subject of baptism.

Referring to the multitudes baptized by John, Mr. Wesley says, "Such prodigious numbers could hardly be baptized by immersing their whole bodies under water; nor can we think they were provided with change of raiment for it, which was scarcely practicable for such vast multitudes. And yet they could not be immersed naked with modesty, nor in their wearing apparel with safety. It seems, therefore, that they stood in ranks on the edge of the river, and that John, passing along before them, *cast water on their heads or faces*, by which means he might baptize many thousands in a day."[7]

Concerning "washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and couches," he observes, "The Greek word (*baptismos*) means indifferently either washing or sprinkling. The cups, pots, and vessels were washed; the couches sprinkled."[8]

"'And they both went down'—out of the chariot. It does not follow that he was baptized by immersion. The text neither affirms nor intimates any thing concerning it."[9]

"'We are buried with him by baptism'—alluding to the ancient mode of baptizing by immersion."[10] And here the Baptists raise the shout! But does Mr. Wesley say that the only ancient mode of baptizing was immersion? Did he believe it? Assuredly not; or he would have positively concluded, as the Baptists do, that the eunuch was immersed; but on the contrary, he declares that "it does *not* follow that he was baptized by immersion." If he believed that *the only* mode of baptizing among the ancients was immersion, why does he say that John "*cast water on the heads and faces*" of the multitudes whom he baptized? That Mr.

[7] Notes on New Test. Matt. iii. 6.
[8] Notes, Mark vii. 4.
[9] Ibid. Acts viii. 38.
[10] Ibid. Rom. vi. 4.

Wesley did not believe immersion was the only mode of baptism practised anciently, is evident from his note on Col. ii. 12: "Buried with him in baptism, by which ye also are risen with him through faith of the operation of God." Mr. Wesley comments: "The ancient manner of baptizing by immersion is as manifestly alluded to here, as the ancient manner of baptizing by SPRINKLING or POURING of water is in Heb. x. 22. But," he adds, "NO STRESS is laid on the *age* of the baptized, or the *manner* of performing it, IN ONE OR THE OTHER PLACE." This is decisive. But we continue our references. "'And were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea'—perhaps *sprinkled* here and there with drops of water from the sea or cloud, by which baptism might be more evidently signified."[11] In his Journal, he observes, "I baptized seven adults, two of them by immersion."[12] Of course, the other five were baptized some other way, probably by sprinkling, as his note above on 1 Cor. x. 2 enables us to conclude.

The catholic views of Mr. Wesley on the *mode* of baptism may be obtained from his treatise on Baptism, published in the year 1756, and contained in his works, vol. vi. p. 12. We make the following extracts. "Baptism," says he, "is performed by washing, dipping, or sprinkling the person in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who is hereby devoted to the ever-blessed Trinity. I say by *washing, dipping*, or *sprinkling;* BECAUSE IT IS NOT DETERMINED IN SCRIPTURE IN WHICH OF THESE WAYS IT SHOULD BE DONE, NEITHER BY ANY EXPRESS PRECEPT, NOR BY ANY EXAMPLE AS CLEARLY PROVES IT; NOR BY THE FORCE OR MEANING OF THE WORD BAPTIZO." Referring to the washing of cups, &c., according to the Jewish custom, he says, "Here, then, the word baptism, in its *natural* sense, is not taken for dip-

[11] Notes, 1 Cor. x. 2. [12] Works, vol. iv. 16, March 21st, 1759.

ping, but for washing or cleansing. And that this is the true meaning of the word *baptizo*, is *testified by the greatest scholars, and most proper judges in this matter.*" Again: "As there is no clear proof of dipping in Scripture, *so there is very probable proof of the contrary.* It is highly probable THE APOSTLES THEMSELVES baptized great numbers, *not* by dipping, but by WASHING, SPRINKLING, or POURING water. This clearly represented the cleansing from sin, which is prefigured by baptism. And the quantity of water was not material—no more than the quantity of bread and wine in the Lord's supper." And so he concludes—"To sum up all, the manner of baptizing, whether by dipping or sprinkling, is not determined in Scripture. There is no command for one rather than the other. There is no example from which we can conclude for dipping rather than for sprinkling. There are probable examples of both; and both are equally contained in the natural meaning of the word."[13]

Dr. Adam Clarke also has often been adduced by the Baptists in proof of the *exclusiveness* of immersion—and we proceed to defend him before the reader. In his observations at the end of Mark's Gospel, he says, "On the mode of administering baptism, there need be no dispute among Christians: both dipping and sprinkling are legitimate forms; and either may be used, as the consciences or religious prejudices of the parties may direct; but the thing itself, in

[13] As our Baptist brethren are very fond of quoting Mr. Wesley on baptism, I invite their attention to his note on "close communion," as it is called. Note, Acts xi. 17: "Who was I, that I could withstand God?" "Particularly laying down rules of Christian communion, which exclude any whom he hath admitted into the church of the firstborn from wor shipping God together. Oh that all church-governors would consider how bold a usurpation this is, on the authority of the Supreme Lord of the church! Oh that the sin of thus withstanding God may not be laid to the charge of those, who, perhaps with good intention, but in an overfondness for their own forms, have done it, and are continually doing it!"

its great reference, is of the utmost importance." Extracts from his Theology, pp. 253, 254. "Were the people dipped or sprinkled? for it is certain *bapto* and *baptizo* mean both. 'They were dipped,' say some. Can any man suppose," the doctor continues, "that it was possible for John to dip all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea, and of all the country round about Jordan? Were both men and women dipped? for certainly both came to his baptism. This never could have comported with safety or decency. Were they dipped in their clothes? This would have endangered their lives, if they had not with them a change of raiment. But suppose these were dipped, *which I think it is impossible to prove,* does it follow that in all regions of the world men and women must be dipped, in order to be evangelically baptized? Those who are dipped or immersed in water, in the name of the Trinity, I believe to be evangelically baptized. Those who are washed or sprinkled with water in the name of the Trinity, *I believe to be equally so*—and the repetition of such a baptism I believe to be profane. To say that sprinkling or aspersion is no gospel baptism, is as incorrect as to say that immersion is none. Lastly, to assert that infant baptism is unscriptural, is as rash and reprehensible as any of the rest. Myriads of conscientious people choose to dedicate their infants to God by public baptism. They are in the right!—and by acting thus, *follow the general practice of the Jewish and Christian church*—a practice from which it is as needless as it is dangerous to depart."

The Baptists have made the same plausible and captivating misrepresentations in explaining the old versions of the Bible. We shall mention some of the most important.

MARTIN LUTHER'S version. "Luther, one of the great Reformers, gave the Bible translated to the Germans, that they might read in their own language the wonderful works of God, and he rendered *baptize* into the word signifying to

immerse."[14] Again, "Or as Luther, the great reformer, renders it in his German Testament, *Johannes der Taufer*—John the Dipper."[15] "Other translators may do as they please; *baptize* may be twisted into all sorts of meaning except *immersion*—except indeed in the case of old versions. *Luther* may say that it means to immerse, and his version shall continue to be circulated; but wo be to the Baptists if *they* say so; and what is the reason?"[16]

Will not the reader be surprised when he is reminded that Luther himself baptized by sprinkling, and that the Germans and all the Lutherans who use this very translation of Luther, also, in the present day, baptize by sprinkling? The German minister, when he takes the water in his hand and *sprinkles* or *pours* it on the subject, says, "*Ich taufe dich.*" And so Luther himself, when he took the water in his hand, and *sprinkled* or *poured* it on the head of the subject, said, "ICH TAUFE DICH." The meaning, therefore, Luther gave to *taufer* and *taufen*, as it respects *mode*, was *sprinkle* or *pour*. And so he translates the word *wash*, in Mark vii. 4: "*Und wenn sie vom markte kommen, essen sie nich, sie* WASHEN SICH *denn*"—*they* WASH THEMSELVES. And so in Luke xi. 38. "*Da das der Pharisaer sah verwunderte er sich, dass er sich nicht vor den essen* GEWASCHEN HATTE"—had not WASHED himself. Indeed, the Germans use these words with specific reference to the sacrament of baptism, or in a sense that signifies *washing*. And so the English and German lexicographers translate these words, and whenever they use words expressing immersion, *taufen*, is not among them.[17]

[14] Mr. Woolsey, (a Baptist,) p. 75. [15] Ibid. p. 138.

[16] Report of Baptist Bible Society for 1840, p. 89.

[17] English and German Dictionary, by F. A. Weber, Leipzic ed. 1833. BUCKHARDT, Berlin ed. 1823. Also, English, German, and French Dictionary, 3d ed., Leipsic, 1763, by Christian Ludwig.

The Baptists have affirmed, particularly in their discussions with the Lutheran Church, "*that Luther himself, the great Reformer, condemned the practice of sprinkling, and even disapproved of infant baptism.*" That an assertion so entirely unfounded should be hazarded by any one, can be explained only by the reckless spirit of party; and it is a matter of regret that any, specially Christian ministers, in their preaching or writings, should ever sacrifice candor to the impulse of such a spirit.

Luther's hostility to popery is not susceptible of stronger proof than is his most cordial support of infant baptism and the validity of sprinkling. The proof we shall now give.

"That the dipping of a *child* in water, or *sprinkling it with water* according to the command of Christ, should cleanse it from sin and transfer it from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God, is reviled by reason," &c. *Singularia Lutheri*, by Philip Saltzman, *Jena edition*, 1564, tit. 220, art. Baptism, p. 657. "Inasmuch as there is neither ornament nor honor at baptism, and God does outwardly no more than *apply a* HANDFUL of water," &c. Ibid. chap. viii. p. 669. "I consider that *by far* the *safest* baptism is *the baptism of children*," &c. Ibid. chap. x. p. 602. "Devils must flee from baptism; why?—they do not regard the water and the letter, but it is because *God has commanded* that we must use our hand and tongue in administering it by SPRINKLING water upon the subject in connection with the words prescribed by God," &c. Ibid. chap xi. p. 663. "Again, if any one can obtain baptism, and yet cavils in this manner, how can a mere handful of water be of any benefit?—he cannot be saved. For *he despises God's word and the ordinance of Christ; he treats Christ as though he had acted foolishly in ordaining and commanding things useless.*" Luther's Works, Achter Theil, fol. 58.

Copy of a letter of Dr. M. L. to his beloved wife, written in Halle:—

"1546, Num. 61.

"Grace and peace in the Lord.

"Dear Katy, we arrived at Halle to-day at 8 o'clock, but we could not go to Eisleben. We were met by a large *anabaptist* woman with waves of water and great cakes of ice that covered the ground; she threatened to baptize *us over again*, and as we could not retreat in consequence of the Mulda (a stream of water) in our rear, we were obliged to remain in Halle, between the waters; not, however, as though we thirsted for *so much water*," &c.

MARTINUS LUTHER, D.

"To my kind and beloved Katy Luther,
in Wittenburg."

Indeed, Luther was baptized in *infancy* by *affusion*, and considering this valid, he was never rebaptized. Dr. Fuller, a learned Baptist, of this country, in his work on "Baptism and Communion," p. 125, observes, "Instead of restoring Christian Baptism, and thus extricating themselves from this, as from other corruptions, *Luther* and Calvin both *allowed infant baptism* to remain, *and practised it.*" Dr. Fuller has too much good sense and candor to bear false witness against Luther, and certainly he will be received by the Baptists as a credible witness in the premises.

The PESCHITO-SYRIAC version. The most extravagant assertions have been made concerning the antiquity of this version. Bishop Walton, Carpzov, Leusden, Bishop Lowth, and Dr. Kennicott fix its date in the first century. Bauer, and some other German critics, in the second century; Jahn, at the latest, in the second century; and De Rossi pronounces it to be very ancient, but does not specify any pe-

cise date. But the most probable opinion is that of Michaelis, who ascribes it to the close of the first, or to the early part of the second century.[18] Mr. Woolsey affirms that "the venerable *Peschito-Syriac* version was evidently executed by the last of the first century,"[19] that it is "*the very best that has ever been made*," and that it has *baptize* translated by *immerse*. In the first place, this very version reads, "when she (Lydia) was baptized WITH HER CHILDREN."[20] Secondly. This is proof that infant baptism existed before the close of the second century. Thirdly. It is *not* admitted that this version translates the word *baptize* by *immerse*. The best critics deny it, and say that "the Syriac version employs a word which signifies 'to confirm—to establish'—that is, refers to 'the *rite*' of *confirmation*, while the manner of this is apparently left without being at all expressed."[21] Fourthly. The Baptists themselves confess that this version is not favorable to their views. "I confess, I can derive no countenance to my practice as a Baptist from this version."[22] Fifthly. This version is the present Bible of the Nestorian Christians, and their word for *baptize* is exclusively appropriated to the sacrament of baptism. Sixthly. The Nestorian Christians "baptize either by immersion or affusion, and make no objection when they see our missionaries baptize by sprinkling, but consider it as good and valid baptism."[23]

The DUTCH, DANISH, and SWEDISH version. The

[18] Horne's Introduction, new ed., from the 8th London edition, vol. i. 270.

[19] p. 71.

[20] Kurtz, p. 99. "The Coptic version gives the same reading." Hall on the Law of Baptism.

[21] Judd's reply to Professor Stuart, p. 164.

[22] See New York Evangelist, Jan. 23, 1841.

[23] Hall on the Law of Baptism, 3d ed. p. 130.

Baptists affirm that the "Dutch, Danish, and Swedish versions have the words in dispute translated by words signifying immersion."[24] Dr. Henderson, who has studied the languages of Northern Europe on the ground, and is familiar with their idioms, shall be authority upon this subject, and no one will question him as authority. Says he, "As it respects the Gothic dialects, which have been repeatedly appealed to with great confidence, it is a settled point with all who are acquainted with them, that the reference is totally irrelevant. That the Mæso-Gothic *daupian*, the Anglo-Saxon *dyppan*, the Dutch *doopan*, the Swedish *dopa*, the Danish *dobe*, and the German *taufen*, all correspond in sound to our English word *dip*, does not admit of any dispute, any more than the fact that *dab*, *daub*, and *dub* have the same correspondence; but nothing would be more erroneous than to conclude, with the exception of the Anglo-Saxon, that they have the same signification. No Dutchman, Dane, Swede, or German would for a moment imagine that the words belonging to their respective languages meant any thing else than baptism by the application of water to the body baptized. The words are never used in those languages in another sense, or in application to any other subject. Where the Germans would express *dip* or *immerse*, they employ *tauchen* and not *taufen*, which is the word by which *baptize* is translated. The Danes, in like manner, use *dyppe* and *neddyppe*, for *dip*, and not *dobe*. And that neither Luther nor the authors of the Dutch, Danish, and Swedish versions had any intention of conveying the idea of immersion as implied in baptize, is obvious from the preposition which they have used with the verb. Thus we read in German, *mit* wasser taufen; in Danish, dobe *met* vand;

[24] Report of the American Foreign Bible Society, 1840, p. 38. Woolsey, p. 138.

in Swedish, dopa *med* vatn; in Dutch, doopen *met* wasser; i. e. *with* water, and not *in* water; which phraseology is as foreign to these languages as the practice which it would sanction is unknown to the inhabitants of the countries in which they are spoken. Even the Mennonites in Holland, and other parts, though they reject infant baptism, administer the ordinance by *pouring*, and not by immersion."[25] We deem it needless to consider the unfairness of the Baptists any further in their appeals to ancient and modern versions of the Bible on this subject. The same exposure might be made in every attempt which they make to support their claims, though they assume that "*to them is committed the sole guardianship of pure and faithful translations of the oracles of God into the languages of the earth*,"[26] and that they are "*divinely and peculiarly set for the defence and dissemination of the gospel, as delivered to men by its Heavenly Author*;"[27] and yet these "guardians" and "defenders" of the truth are divided among themselves, in their translations of the sacred oracles—Campbell and Woolsey on one side, and Carson and Judd on the other—with Robert Hall meanwhile inflicting some of the heaviest blows upon the iron wall of "close communion" that ever fell from mortal hands.

But it is time we had closed these remarks. I never knew or read of a version, ancient or modern, that sustains the exclusiveness of the Baptists on the subject of baptism, and I never knew or read of a pædobaptist author who admitted the validity of immersion to the exclusion of sprinkling and pouring as proper modes of baptism. The unfairness of the Baptists in adducing pædobaptist writers as witnesses to the exclusiveness of immersion is seen in this,

[25] Hall on the Law of Baptism, pp. 131, 132.

[26] American and Foreign Bible Society Report, 1840, p. 79.

[27] Professor Eaton, in his speech before the Baptist Bible Society, at its anniversary.

that they pervert their *admissions* of the validity of dipping into so many positive arguments in favor of the *exclusiveness* of immersion. And hence sometimes the Baptist preacher presents in the pulpit pædobaptist works and pamphlets as proofs of the exclusiveness of immersion, though, as we have seen, nothing can be more unfair or untrue. It were well, on all such occasions, to suspend the judgment till an opportunity be afforded to settle the question by *the whole* testimony of the authors in question. And let the reader be assured, that while these authors admitted the validity of immersion as *a mode* of baptism, they made a clear discrimination between the *validity* of a mode, and the *exclusiveness* of immersion, in the works which they have written—works full of strong arguments against the *exclusiveness* of immersion, and in favor of sprinkling and pouring, as modes more expedient, rational, and scriptural. They proceeded upon the ground, that *a* mode, and *the only* mode, have nothing common in principle; they never admitted, but always opposed, the *exclusiveness* of immersion.

Eighthly. All the evangelical denominations that practise sprinkling and pouring in administering the initiating sacrament of the Christian dispensation, have been crowned with great and signal success in publishing the gospel among men. But if there had been any thing *essential* in the mode of the initiating sacrament of the Christian dispensation, such would not have been their success. And so the success of the Baptists, at home and abroad, is in proof that the mode of initiating into the Christian church which they adopt is non-essential. It is advisable however, that the churches send pædobaptist missionaries to the polar regions.

It may be observed here as a striking fact, that revivals of religion rarely commence among our Baptist brethren at the water's edge, or at the communion table; but great revivals have commenced among other denominations at the

Lord's table, and during the administration of baptism in the church—which is an impressive and forcible attestation of the divine approval of these institutions as means of grace. We now collect all these proofs together, obtained from the plain Scriptures; the inherent meaning of *βαπτίζω* in its gospel sense; the force of the original Greek prepositions; the harmonious connection of the external mode of baptism with the mode of spiritual baptism, and the spirit of the plan of salvation; and from collateral sources;—and we infer from them all, that the most appropriate mode of baptism is sprinkling or pouring: while immersion is not to be excluded, as *a* mode equally valid, though not equally rational, appropriate, and expressive, as pouring and sprinkling. We shall, in the next chapter, consider some objections usually urged by the Baptists against the views maintained in this part of the work.

CHAPTER VII.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

In this chapter, we shall consider the prominent arguments of the Baptists in favor of exclusive immersion as the initiating sacrament of the church under the Christian dispensation.

First. "Baptism is a positive institution, and therefore should be rigidly adhered to." Granted—but where is *immersion* positively enjoined in the Scriptures as baptism? No where. The law of baptism refers to the *fact*, and not to the *mode* or *circumstances* of the mode of baptism. The *spirit* of the law of baptism, is our rule of duty, while the *manner* of obedience is not determined positively, either by precept or example. Circumcision was a positive institution,

but the mode of administering it was not defined. So the Lord's supper is a positive institution, but the mode of receiving it is nowhere enjoined. The inference, therefore, from the *nature*, to the *mode* of baptism, is utterly groundless. Besides, this is a new principle of duty, originated by the Baptists, in order to escape the irresistible force of moral or inferential reasoning in favor of other modes of baptism; and it is a principle unsound as it is novel. Circumstantial evidence is often as strong and clear as positive. The necessity of moral duty is often argued by inferential reasoning. And hence, as the *mode* of baptism is purely inferential, it may be as clearly deduced from circumstantial testimony as if it were specifically and positively enjoined.

Secondly. "Since John is found at Jordan, the inference is that he baptized by immersion." What—*inference* respecting a *positive* institution! It is an absurdity in terms Positive injunctions leave no room for inference. The Baptists most strenuously and scrupulously demand adherence to the original form of positive institutions. Mr. Booth, in his "Pædobaptism Examined," observes, "*Compliance must be so, and no more, and no less, and no otherwise.*" This is the invariable requisition of Baptist principles, and Baptist ministers, on the subject of baptism. And yet obligation is here founded on *inference*—that is, a positive institution is made a subject of inference. But granted. And then, upon the same ground of deduction, Saul of Tarsus, Cornelius, the jailer, Lydia, and the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, were baptized by sprinkling or pouring. And so here we have sprinkling and pouring also elemental in the positive institution of baptism. But the Baptists will not admit the force of inference in establishing these modes as positive institutions, and hence they must abandon the ground on which they determine the positive character of immersion as the mode of baptism. The true reason

doubtless why John took his station at Jordan was, because of the multitudes who came to be baptized, as we shall see from the following considerations. John removed from his position at Jordan, and took a more convenient station "in Enon, near Salem, because there was much water there"—and here again the Baptists straightway conclude, that the sole object for selecting such a spot was *immersion*. But this is not assigned as the reason in the sacred record; for, on this account, he need not have removed his station from Jordan![1] The term translated "much water," in the original is plural—*ὕδατα πολλὰ, hydata polla—many waters, many streams or springs.* And why did John select such a place as this? Obviously, for the convenience of the multitudes who attended on his ministry—to obtain water for their cattle, for themselves, and for purposes independent of baptism. And thus, independently of the question of immersion, even admitting (which we do not) that John baptized by immersion, he should have selected the place he did, or some place like it. There is not one particle of proof that the purpose was immersion only. In the latitude of Palestine the mercury ranges in winter from 40° to 50°, and, in summer, from 80° to 100°; and in the plains of Jordan, much higher. Consequently, at a season of the year when the heat of a tropical sun was intense, and the people and their beasts would be exposed to great inconvenience on the open sandy beach of Jordan, and especially John himself would be prostrated in the performance of the arduous labors of his mission, it was found desirable at least,

[1] If John removed from Jordan to Enon because "there was much water there," that is, for the purpose of immersion, then there was *more water* in the river of Jordan than at Enon, and the reason given for John's removal falls to the ground. Besides, just now it was assumed, that because "John was found at Jordan, the inference is, that he baptized by immersion"—then why does he leave Jordan, and go to Enon?

most probably, necessary, for John to remove to some salubrious and pleasant station, such as Enon, farther north, where there were many springs, with their shade, and every convenience that John could desire for himself, the multitude, their families, their servants, and their beasts of burden. Besides, the water at Enon was better than that of Jordan. "The water of Jordan is turbid and black, and unfit to drink, until it has been filtered, or stood several hours in vessels and settled." Jordan, by the Greeks, was called *μελας*, *black*. "I observed that the river (Jordan) was scarcely half full, yet the water was somewhat turbid." Dr. Durbin's Observations in the East, vol. ii. 6. "The shores of the Dead Sea, and the valley to the north of it, consist of an expanse of salt, dry mud, and moving sand. In proceeding through the plain, Chateaubriand discovered what at first appeared to be sand in motion. On drawing nearer, he beheld a yellow current, scarcely to be distinguished from the sands on its shores. It was deeply sunk below its banks, slowly creeping toward the pestilential lake by which it is engulfed. *This was the Jordan.*" Murray's Encyclopædia of Geography, vol. ii. 255. The object of John therefore in removing from Jordan to Enon, was to obtain an adequate supply of wholesome water for the purposes of drinking, cooking, and ceremonial and ordinary ablutions. The necessity of "much water" for *these* purposes is obvious. "Much water" *was* required by the multitude for these purposes. In a word, the climate; the *quality*, as well as *quantity*, of water required obviously for other purposes than those of baptism; the superior conveniences of Enon as a station; and the fact, that there was more water in Jordan than at Enon,—induce the belief, that the *mode* of baptism did not enter at all into the considerations that caused John to remove his station from Jordan to Enon. To suppose that immersion was the principal

object in view is a mere *surmise* originating in the imagination, and unsupported by a particle of proof, even the remotest probability. No argument can be drawn from the history of the case in support of the hypothesis of the Baptists. But the necessity for much water being admitted on all hands as existing independently of the mode of baptism, it is most probable that John baptized by sprinkling or pouring—as we have seen in the preceding part of this treatise. The multitudes baptized; the distance they came to be baptized; the great inconvenience of immersing both men and women in their apparel; the indecency of baptizing in a state of nudity; the probability that no change of raiment was brought for the purpose of immersion; and above all, the brevity of John's ministry—are so many circumstances that render it morally certain that John baptized by the convenient and easy mode of sprinkling or pouring.

Thirdly. "Why did the apostles baptize in the open air, and at the water's edge, where was much water?" The answer applicable in the preceding case is equally applicable here. In the first place, in the beginning of Christianity, the apostles had no houses in which to preach and baptize; and, therefore, where else could they baptize but in the open air? And secondly, because of the vast multitudes crowding every day to their ministry, houses however large would have been too small to preach in, and to afford conveniences for the administration of the ordinances; and hence they must retire to the open air, or to some convenient and well-watered parts of the country. If as great numbers attended the Christian ministry in the present day, and converts were as numerous now as they were in the days of the apostles, there would still be the necessity of resorting to some convenient position in the open air to preach the gospel and baptize the converts.

Fourthly. "Where reference is made to the operation of

the Holy Spirit, under the ideas of sprinkling and pouring, the meaning is *figurative.*" Granted: and then immersion is placed farthest from the design of the figure. Had the Scriptures read, "I will *immerse* you in clean water," doubtless a figurative meaning in favor of immersion would have been zealously supported by the Baptists. But there is no prophecy or promise in the Bible referring to, or defining baptism, by immersion, though there are many respecting sprinkling and pouring.

Fifthly. "Immersion is set forth under the figure of a burial." Then it is inferential, and hence cannot be positive. Besides, sprinkling and pouring are set forth under the figures of spiritual baptism by sprinkling and pouring; and consequently, on the same ground that the Baptists suppose immersion consistent and proper, they should admit the propriety and validity of sprinkling and pouring. But there is no allusion whatever in this passage of Scripture to any *mode* of baptism. It refers to the *spiritual nature and obligation* of Christian baptism.

(1.) It is a plain *antithesis.* "We are buried with him," is the first part; "even so we should walk in newness of life," is the second part. "Newness of life," which every Christian *actually experiences* in this life, is evidently *spiritual;* consequently "buried with Christ" is also *spiritual;* and to understand this phrase as a *literal* burial under water, is, therefore, to give it a meaning which the laws of exegesis positively forbid; for there is no resemblance between a *spiritual burial unto sin* and *a literal immersion in water.* Give this passage a *spiritual* meaning, and there is a propriety in baptism by *water,* and a coincidence between formal and spiritual baptism; give it a *literal* meaning, and there is neither propriety nor coincidence in the case. The ritual services of the Jewish dispensation were typical of moral purification, and not of death or interment, and

analogy under the Christian dispensation is preserved by investing baptism with a spiritual and not a literal signification.

(2.) Upon the hypothesis of the Baptists, there is no appropriateness whatever in baptism. None in representing the spiritual character of the subject of baptism. Baptism is an emblem of moral purity, or regeneration by the Holy Spirit: it signifies *spiritual life* in the subject, and not natural decomposition, putrefaction, loathsomeness, and death. None in representing Christ's interment. The body of the blessed Saviour was laid in a stone cell, *above-ground*, and not in a tomb sunk in the earth. Hence, in the passage before us, there is no reference whatever to the *mode* of baptism.

(3.) Upon the hypothesis of the Baptists, the passage before us proves too much, and hence fails altogether. In the next verse it is said: "We have been *planted* together in the likeness of his death." Planting with Christ is spiritual, and this every believer actually experiences. That is, as the seed sown in the ground derives from the ground all its nourishment and fruitfulness, so the believer derives from the vicarious death of Christ all his spiritual life and fruitfulness. It is evident, no external mode of baptism whatever can illustrate the nature or manner of this spiritual derivation. If the "*likeness* of Christ's *death*" is to be illustrated literally by baptism, then immersion or plunging cannot do it, for Christ *died on the cross*, and so the hypothesis of the Baptists implies too much. But if the "likeness of Christ's death" is to be illustrated *spiritually* by baptism, then all external mode whatever is out of the question. "Planted in the likeness of his death" signifies *a participation* of the spiritual blessings of Christ's death, and, in the nature of things, no mode whatever can be an appropriate emblem of this participation: *the fact*, not *the*

mode, of the participation, is all that is or can be signified in baptism. The *mode* of baptism can no more represent the moral or spiritual burial of the believer, or his participation of the spiritual blessings of the vicarious death of Christ, than it can represent the sacrificial quality of Christ's death. These are great facts which have no analogies of a sensible nature in the universe. Besides, (in ver. 6,) we are said to be "*crucified* with Christ" by baptism, which evidently is *spiritual* also, and, in the nature of things, this spiritual crucifixion cannot be represented by any sensible analogies in the universe. Indeed, even admitting that the passage before us is to be *literally* interpreted, there is no resemblance between plunging into the water, and the nailing of a body to the cross. And thus, *though* the spiritual meaning of the passage be omitted altogether, it proves too much for the Baptists, and so entirely fails. Nor is this all. It proves too much in another respect. In one instance, baptism is made to represent the *death* of Christ, in another his *crucifixion*, in another his *burial*, and in another, "being *planted* with him." Thus, the *unity* of the figure is destroyed; for how can the mode of baptism represent all these circumstances or events which are essentially dissimilar? especially in the case of immersion, which in fact resembles not one of these events? Christ's *crucifixion* was literal—*immersion* does not resemble that: Christ's *death* was literal—*immersion* does not resemble that: Christ's *burial* was literal—*immersion* does not resemble that: Christ's *resurrection* was literal—immersion does not resemble that, for who can tell *how* Christ's body was revived? Besides, the believer rises *spiritually* from a state of moral death. If immersion resembles *the raising and nailing of a body to a cross*, how can it resemble the *taking down and burial of a body in the grave*—acts entirely dissimilar? And so we repeat, the interpretation the Baptists give the

passage under consideration proves too much, and so fails altogether.

(4.) If baptism represents Christ's burial *literally*, then the person baptized must remain under the water till the third day, for Christ lay in the tomb till the third day; and then the Baptists are to keep the persons they immerse three days under the water; and in this case, natural death must be the result, or the analogy fails.

(5.) And so the parallel passage, in Gal. iii. 27, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have *put on* Christ," is to be interpreted *literally*. And then every person when baptized must *put off* and *put on* his apparel, and so be baptized naked! Indeed, this was the construction given to this passage by certain literalists in former days, and so they baptized in a state of perfect nudity, both males and females. They read "*buried* by baptism," and so commenced *plunging;* they read "*put on* Christ," and so they baptized *naked;* they read "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and so they adopted trine immersion, or plunging *three* times: such are the gross absurdities of a literal interpretation of the three phrases before us—two of which absurdities the modern Baptists have abolished, but the first of which they still retain, and which unfortunately is one of their distinguishing characteristics as a Christian denomination.

(6.) "Buried into death"—what, death *after* burial! Crucified *after* death! Burial cannot be properly applied to a living man; if so, we must bury the subject prospectively, and consequently use the "burial service," instead of the baptismal form, whenever we baptize.

(7.) If immersion is set forth under the idea of a burial, then "*buried* by baptism into death," means buried into *death* by *death*—which is a perfect absurdity; and "buried with him in baptism," means buried by a grave into a grave

—which is nonsense; and "baptized into Moses"—as it may be translated—means buried into Moses—which is revolting in the extreme; and "baptized into Christ," means *buried into Christ*—which is the most shocking blasphemy and profanity.

(8.) Some nations burn, embalm, and deposit their dead in vaults, or hang *up the body* till the flesh decays, which immersion could never set forth *to them*. The gospel is to be preached to all nations, as a universal blessing; and it is evident that *immersion* could not in the same manner set forth the idea of spiritual death to those nations who *burn, embalm, and hang up their dead*.[2]

(9.) The case of Jonah was a sign of Christ's burial and resurrection, and Christ himself declares that no other sign should be given in addition to this sign. It is impossible that Christ's *ordinance* should contradict his *words*, when he knew that every day his disciples by baptizing did typically set forth his burial and resurrection.

(10.) Why did Christ's disciples wonder "what the rising from the dead should mean," if they understood the mean-

[2] Mr. Robert Robinson, the Baptist historian, in his "History of Baptism," sustains this objection. "The first English Baptists," says he, "when they read the phrase, *buried* in baptism, instantly thought of an *English* burial, and therefore baptized by laying the body in the form of burying in their own country; but they might have observed that Paul wrote to the Romans, and the Romans did not *bury*, but *burned* their dead and buried nothing but their ashes in urns; *so that no fair reasoning on the form* of baptizing can be drawn from the mode of burying the dead, in England." In like manner it was a custom of the ancient Mexicans to burn their dead. "On the death of a person, his corpse was dressed in the peculiar habiliments of his tutelar deity. It was strewed with pieces of paper, which operated as charms against the dangers of the dark road he was to travel. His body was *burned*, and the ashes, collected in a vase, were preserved in one of the apartments of his house. Here we have successively the usages of the Roman Catholics, the Mussulman, the Tartar, and the ancient Greek and Roman." Prescott's Conquest of Mexico, vol. i. 63, 64.

ing of the baptism which they administered every day to refer to his resurrection?

(11.) Indeed, after all, if the mode of baptism is set forth by a burial, then in baptizing, as in burying, the water should be poured or sprinkled on the subject till he be covered with the water.

(12.) The fact is, our Baptist brethren can find no meaning in immersion unless they can make it refer to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, to which it has no reference, since the sacrament of the Lord's supper has been expressly instituted by Christ himself "*to show forth his death* till he come;" and neither men nor angels have any right to "add" another sacrament to show forth this great event, or to give another meaning to either of the sacraments not sustained by the Scriptures.

These considerations compel us to reject the interpretation of the Baptists, and we proceed to give the true import of the text.

Baptism is a federal act, and once administered, is in force during life. Thus, the apostle uses the past tenses with a present signification, and this is in harmony with the genius of the Greek and Hebrew languages. Thus, in the Hebrew: "The earth *is* full of violence," *i. e.* the earth has been filled with violence. Gen. vi. 13: "I *delight* to do thy will, O my God," *i. e.* "I have delighted to do thy will," &c. Ps. xl. 8. Here the past tense indicates a state which, beginning at some former period, still continues to exist at the time of narration. So in the Greek. The past tenses are often used with a present signification, *i. e.* indicating a *continued* action, as *συνετάφημεν*. Thus, we "*are* buried," &c., *i. e* have been buried, &c., signifies that, having once assumed the solemn obligations implied in baptism, they continue in force through life. Consequently, if the burial referred to in the passage under consideration is *literal*, the

Baptists are bound to keep their converts under water during life—a conclusion certainly not in harmony with the import of baptism. The design of the apostle is to illustrate by baptism the character and obligations of the believer. "How shall we that are *dead to sin* live any longer therein?" *i. e.* how shall we, who are separated from sin, have any thing more to do with it?—a phraseology common among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins. Thus, "*Nihil mecum tibi, mortuus tibi sum.*" Plautus. *I have nothing to do with thee; I am dead to thee. Τέθνηκα ἐμοὶ, I am* DEAD *to thee.* Libanius. The essential character of the believer implies, that having renounced sin, and been redeemed from the guilt and power of it, he is to refrain from the practice of it through life. Obligation to do so is next enforced by reference to the import of baptism. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?" That is, by baptism we are formally consecrated to Christ, formally recognised as participating in the blessings of his death, and formally laid under obligation to conform to the doctrines essentially connected with his death, to die *unto* sin, as he died *for* sin. By baptism, we are recognised as sustaining a *moral* and *spiritual* relation to the death of Christ, which is essentially inconsistent with sin. Nor is this all. Obligation to walk in newness of life is also imposed by baptism. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life:" a *new* life, holy and spiritual;—*life*, death to sin;—*life*, during all life;—*life*, in a word, conformable to the obligations imposed upon man by the gospel of Jesus Christ. These great *facts* are signified by baptism, and that is enough. This interpretation is intelligible, and is consistent with the remainder of the chapter and the whole plan of salvation—an interpretation

to which allusion to any *mode* of baptism could impart no additional force or propriety. The *substance*, and not the *mode* of baptism, is all that is required for the argument of the apostle, and is all he employs. The Baptists neglect the *substance*, and suppose a *mode* which, if admitted, destroys the appropriateness and force of the apostle's reasoning.

In a word, the true meaning of this celebrated passage is, Baptism ritually unites to Christ, and sets forth a profession of religion founded upon his *death*, the subject being hereby typically washed from his former sins and pollutions, that he may afterward "walk in newness of life." Old things are done away, all things are become new. The old man is dead; old connections, old practices, old principles, old names, old dispositions, are no more; and the young believer testifies to the world that he is dead to the world, and "alive in Christ Jesus;" and that he will no longer "walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" that he has formed new connections, adopted new practices, embraced new principles, possesses a new nature, and in future is to be known under a *new name* among men: and thus, his baptism sets forth a *profession* of Christ. Profession of Christ may be made by any mode, and that is the most proper mode which best represents the manner of spiritual baptism, which, as we have seen, is frequently set forth under the ideas of sprinkling and pouring. The new birth is effected by *faith*, proved by "newness of life," and set forth by *profession* under any form agreeable to the subject—but not under the idea of a burial, since no mode could represent a spiritual burial but a real burial of the body, which is impossible. And so we conclude that the apostle had no reference to the *mode* of baptism, but simply and alone to the solemn consecration and obligations involved in baptism. A moment's reflection must convince the reader, not only of the inconsistency, but the unfairness of the Baptists. At one

time, they urge upon young converts, that "they must follow their Lord and Master down into the water," and at another time, they impose upon them the hard task of following Christ down "into death." At one time, they insist upon following the example of Christ in *baptism;* and at another time, enjoin the duty of being "planted in the likeness of his death." What then was the *mode* of Christ's death? Why, *crucifixion.* And what is the likeness between immersion and crucifixion? None whatever. And young converts must follow Christ *down into the water,* and *up to the cross,* while in the former case it has been demonstrated that Christ was *not* immersed, and in the latter case, it is impossible to follow his example. The error of the Baptists is, that they confound the *mode* with the *import* of baptism; and hence they lay more stress upon the mode than the import; while indeed the import, which is the principal thing in baptism, may be set forth by one mode as well as another.

Sixthly. "Obligation to be *immersed* is based on the example of Christ." So far from admitting that obligation to be *immersed* rests upon the example of Christ, we do not admit that the obligation to be *baptized* rests upon his example. And thus, whether Christ was baptized by immersion or not, his example, in this sense, is not binding on us. Christ's baptism does not enter in any respect into the question of Christian baptism. The obligation of Christian baptism rests solely upon the commission of Christ to his apostles after his resurrection. "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Before we can acknowledge the obligation to be immersed from the example of Christ, two things at least must be proved: first, that Christ was *immersed;* and secondly, that he enjoined his example in this respect as binding on us.

It is required to be proved, that Christ was immersed at his baptism. *This cannot be done:* indeed, the contrary is deducible from the whole force of inference already considered, and will appear the more probable from other considerations now to be presented. We offer the following considerations to prove, first, that Christ was not immersed; and secondly, that his baptism was not received as an example for any one, whether Jew or Gentile.

(1.) John, who baptized Christ, did not abolish the rites of the *Jewish* dispensation. The Jewish dispensation continued till the death of Christ: His shout on the Cross, "It is finished," rent the vail of the temple from top to bottom, and consummated the Jewish economy. Christ lived and died under the Jewish dispensation, and all that he did previously to his death was in conformity to this dispensation. Indeed, there could not be in force among men *two* dispensations at the same time, and the Christian dispensation was not opened till after the death of Christ. Besides, it is evident, the appointment of ordinances was a part of Christ's ministry, and consequently Christian baptism could not properly be instituted before Christ was inducted into his ministry, and consummated his divine mission in his death. In other words, a *gospel ordinance* could not be in force *before* the introduction of the *gospel dispensation*. Up to this time the Mosaic dispensation was in full force. Hence, John's baptism was not a Christian sacrament.[3]

(2.) John opened his dispensation some time before he knew Christ. "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, *After* me cometh a man who is preferred before me, for he was

[3] "No rite celebrated during the ministry of John, is entitled to a place among Christian sacraments." Robert Hall's Works, vol. i. 372. Robert Hall is high authority among the Baptists.

before me: *and I knew him not:* but that he should be made manifest unto Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." Therefore John's dispensation preceded the Christian dispensation, since the latter was not introduced till *after* the death of Christ. John opened his dispensation and baptized at least six months before Christ commenced his public ministry. And consequently John's baptism was not Christian baptism; so that, whether he baptized Christ by immersion or not, is of no importance in settling the mode of Christian baptism.

(3.) John's baptism was preparatory to the Christian dispensation.[4] As the Jews not only circumcised, but also baptized proselytes, signifying by baptism the impurity and uncleanness of the heathen world; so baptism was administered by John to the Jews, in order to set forth the spirituality of the Christian dispensation, that when the Jewish dispensation, with its initiating ordinance, circumcision, should be abolished, they might not be unaccustomed to baptism, the initiating sacrament of the Christian dispensation. In this sense, John's baptism was wise, as well as preparatory: "that he (Christ) should be made manifest unto Israel, therefore am I come *baptizing with water.*" Now a rite, that was applicable to the Jews only as preparatory, could not be applicable to Christ, nor be an example to Christians; and hence Jesus was not baptized according to John's baptism, nor as an example to Christians.

(4.) John ascribes his commission to the *Father*, and not to Christ. "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him: *but he that sent me to baptize with water*, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit

[4] And this A. Campbell concedes: "John's baptism was not Christ's baptism. It was a preparatory institution." Christian Baptism, "printed and published" by himself, Bethany, Va., 1851, p. 219.

descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." Thus, John's baptism was not an institution adopted by John, but enjoined by the Father, preparatory to the dispensation of the Spirit.[5]

(5.) The form of John's baptism was different from that of Christian baptism. The form that John used is expressed by Paul: "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, *saying*, unto the people, that they *should believe on him who should come after him*, that is, on Christ Jesus."[6] This was the form of John's baptism. Besides, some of the disciples of John had not heard "whether there be any Holy Ghost." So that so far as the names of *two* of the persons of the blessed Trinity are indispensable to the form of Christian baptism, John's baptism was defective. But from all these considerations, even admitting that Christ was baptized according to John's baptism—which we do not—then Christ's baptism was not *Christian* baptism, and hence it cannot be regarded as an example for Christians. But we go one step farther.

(6.) Christ's baptism, in every material point, was not John's baptism. John's baptism was "unto repentance;" but Christ was infinitely holy, and hence could not repent. John's baptism imposed faith in Christ "to come;" Christ could not believe in his own name. Neither was Christ's baptism Christian baptism. Christian baptism required "teaching;" but Christ was infinitely wise, and could not be taught any thing. Christian baptism required faith in

[5] Here we may answer a popular objection. "If John's baptism was administered under the Jewish dispensation, why baptize at all, since circumcision was the appointed initiatory rite of the Jewish dispensation?" God, the Father, thought proper to *add* the rite of baptism, that when, on the death of Christ, circumcision should be abolished, it might be received as the initiating sacrament of the Christian dispensation.

[6] Acts xix. 4.

Christ; but Christ being the object of faith, could not believe in his own name. Christian baptism was administered in the name of the Trinity; but Christ being one of the persons of the Trinity, could not be baptized in his own name. Christian baptism was not instituted till *after* the death of Christ; but Christ was baptized before his death. The *import* of baptism, both as a *sign* and *seal*, was wholly inapplicable to Christ. As a *sign*, it signifieth inward washing and regeneration by the Holy Ghost, which presupposes the defilement of sin. As a *seal*, it is the pledge of our fidelity to God, and of God's fidelity to us. In none of these respects, in the very nature of things, could baptism be applicable to Christ. As therefore all the circumstances of Christ's baptism prove that his baptism was neither John's, nor Christian baptism, it is conclusive that it should not be regarded as an example for Christians; and it remains for us to inquire, what was the character of his baptism.

(7.) It was a formal and solemn inauguration into the high-priest's office under the Christian dispensation. "And John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."[7] What did he mean? Observe, John did not abolish Jewish rites. Christ had already been initiated into the Jewish church by circumcision, which was the initiating ordinance of the Mosaic dispensation, and thus, in this respect, he had fulfilled the righteousness of the Jewish dispensation. He had remained, after this event, "in the obscurity of private life," till he was thirty years of age, the period required by the Jewish law before induction into the high-priest's office. And now he comes to John to fulfil the righteousness of the Jewish

[7] Matt. iii. 14, 15.

law in this respect also. How then was a high-priest initiated into office under the Jewish dispensation? By referring to Ex. xxix. 4, 7, and Lev. viii. 6, 10, 11, 12, it will be seen that the outward form was *washing* and *anointing*. Thus, as the high-priest was initiated into office by washing and anointing, so must Christ, in order to fulfil all righteousness, and to enter upon the great work of atonement for mankind. As to the *mode* of the washing referred to, *that* is not defined in the book of the ceremonial law; but common sense suggests that this ceremonial washing was performed by the *application* of water by pouring or sprinkling, rather than the total *submersion* of the subject. And we may conclude that John administered baptism to Jesus by sprinkling or pouring, when the holy anointing of the Spirit immediately completed his initiation into the office of High-Priest of the Christian dispensation. That this baptism was a formal initiation into the high-priest's office, appears conclusive from Christ's appeal to John's baptism in vindication of his authority for purging the temple. "The *baptism* of John, whence was it? from heaven, or from men?" Had they replied, "From heaven," he would have silenced their compaints at once by answering, "You believe John then had a divine commission as the prophet of God—he consecrated me to the priestly office by baptism—and by virtue of my priestly office, I do these things." Robert Hall, who is great authority among the Baptists, entertains the view we have given of Christ's baptism. "He was inaugurated into his office at his baptism, till which period he remained in the obscurity of private life."[8] He declares, on same page, as already quoted, that "no rite celebrated during the ministry of John, is entitled to a place among Christian sacraments." Hence, according

[8] Robert Hall's Works, vol. i. 372.

to Robert Hall, Christ was initiated into the high-priest's office according to the Jewish dispensation. Now as John did not abolish Jewish rites, and consequently as he initiated Christ into the priestly office according to the requisitions of the Jewish economy, of course when Christ himself, by his death, consummated and abolished the Jewish dispensation, he also abolished the ceremonies contained in his own baptism, and therefore his baptism can never be regarded as an example for the Christian church in all succeeding ages. The circumstances of his baptism can never occur again in fulfilling the ceremonial law. Had Christ's baptism, however, been *Christian* baptism, it might then be regarded in the light of an example.

Those who feel under obligation to follow Christ in his baptism, ought also to teach and submit to circumcision—to delay baptism till the thirtieth year of age—keep the passover —fast forty days and forty nights after baptism—wash the disciples' feet—keep the seventh-day Sabbath as under the Jewish dispensation—and then, if Christ's baptism was John's baptism, and not a Jewish ordinance of initiation into the priestly office, they ought to be *rebaptized* according to the form of the initiating ordinance of the *Christian* dispensation, as Christ's apostles did baptize certain of John's disciples. From all that we have said, it is evident, that Christ's baptism was neither John's nor Christian baptism; and consequently Christ's baptism was not an example to the Jews under John's dispensation, nor to Christians under the Christian dispensation. Even admitting—which we do not—that Christ was baptized according to John's baptism, then his baptism cannot be regarded as an example for us—for certain of John's disciples, as first observed, were rebaptized under the Christian dispensation.

That certain of John's disciples were rebaptized under the Christian dispensation, is evident from the 19th chapter

of Acts: "And he said unto them, unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him who should come after him; that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, *they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*" Mr. Carson admits that these disciples of John were rebaptized. His language is: "I know this is disputed; but for my part, I never doubted it. I cannot see how this can be denied without torturing the word of God." (P. 372.) Nay, further, admitting—which we do not—that Christ was baptized according to John's dispensation by *immersion*, even then the defective character of John's dispensation, the mere *mode* by which its ordinances were administered, could not supersede the necessity of *rebaptism* under the Christian dispensation. In a word, when it is considered that Christ was not baptized according to John's baptism; and that, consequently, his baptism was not an example to the Jews under John's dispensation; that he was not baptized according to Christian baptism, and that his baptism is consequently not an example to Christians; that his baptism had reference solely to his initiation into the priestly office; and that it is morally certain he was baptized by sprinkling or pouring,—all hope of support in favor of immersion, from this quarter, must be for ever abandoned by the Baptists.

We wish to prove, further, that Christ's baptism was never designed by him to be an example either to Jew or Gentile.

John's dispensation, as we have said, was preparatory to the Christian dispensation; and consequently some of Christ's apostles *rebaptized* certain of John's disciples. Therefore, as Christ was baptized under John's dispensation, if he was baptized according to John's baptism, he should have been baptized again under the Christian dispensation,

n order to be an example to us. But as Christ's baptism was not an example to the Jews under John's baptism, since, as we shall presently see, he was baptized *after* all the people had been baptized; so his baptism cannot be an example to us, since he was not *rebaptized* under the Christian dispensation. That his baptism cannot be regarded as an example to the Jews under John's baptism, is fully evident from a single consideration. Our Baptist friends seem to forget that Christ's baptism was administered *too late* to entitle it to the character of an example. Luke says, that "when *all* the people *were* baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also, being baptized," &c.[9] And so the other evangelists say that the baptism of the people *preceded* the baptism of Christ. Why was not Christ baptized in early life? Indeed, why was he not the first to be baptized by John, that his baptism might have all the force of an example, under John's dispensation? And hence, since Christ's baptism was deferred till *the last*, we conclude that his baptism was not designed to be an example to the Jews. And lest some scrupulous mind should doubt the truth of this interpretation of Luke and the other evangelists, we invite attention to the opinion of Robert Robinson, in his History of Baptism, p. 34: "When John began to baptize at Bethabara beyond Jordan, his first baptismal station, Jesus resided at Nazareth in Galilee, and he did not arrive at Bethabara *till all the people had been baptized.*" Mr. Robinson refers to Luke iii. 21. Indeed the whole question of antecedence is settled by the fact, admitted on all hands, that John baptized with a view of Christ "*to come*," which could not have been true, if Christ had previously entered upon his ministry by initiation at his baptism. All the people had been baptized, and consequently were in waiting for him when he came,

[9] Luke iii. 21.

and must have remembered the declaration of John, "This is he of whom I said, he that *cometh after* me is preferred before me." Thus, Christ's baptism was not an example to the Jews under John's dispensation.

Nor was Christ's baptism designed to be an example under the Christian dispensation. In addition to what has been said already, we invite the reader's careful attention to the following considerations. Example does not bind merely as example. There is no force in example itself, as for instance, the mediatorial, the peculiar acts of Christ. There must be some explicit rule to determine what examples bind, and what do not, or else we can never know *which* to follow. It is, therefore, some explicit law that makes example binding; and consequently, in the absence of explicit law, no example can be made binding on the consciences of men. We are bound to follow Christ's example, not simply because *he* did *this* or *that*, but because he has expressly *enjoined the same things on us.* And hence, though Christ was immersed—and we do not believe he was—his example cannot be made binding without positive, explicit law on the subject —*of which we find no record in the Bible.* On the other hand, in the absence of explicit law concerning any example, we are to be governed by the *morality* of the example, and not by the example itself. If the *morality* of an action or example can be shown by any other action, the law of God is fully met, and our obligations are discharged in that case. Thus, it is binding on all to do good, but the actions by which men do good are not specified and enjoined, for actions absolutely different in themselves may possess the same moral quality. So the moral quality of actions not specified, be shown, it is immaterial what the action is which may be adopted, provided it be consistent with truth, purity, and order. Thus, it is binding on all to be baptized, *and the moral quality of baptism may be shown as well by one mode*

as by another. It is admitted, if the action *itself* possess a moral quality, then it is binding. Has immersion, pouring, or sprinkling, in any respect, a moral quality inherent? No: and hence, neither of them is binding in view of its moral quality, since the mode of baptism is nowhere specifically defined and positively enjoined in the Bible. Immersion is made binding neither by any inherent moral quality nor by positive divine law; and so with sprinkling and pouring. We will illustrate this view by two examples from the Scriptures. The first is given in the 13th chapter of the Gospel by John. Christ washes the disciples feet. "I have given you," says Christ, "an example, that you should do as I have done." The moral lesson he teaches is humility, for humility is the moral quality of the action—and never was this exalted grace of the Christian character presented in a more impressive form. But surely Christ did not mean that we should adopt his action in this case, although it is definitely stated that "he arose from supper and laid aside his garments, and took a towel and girded himself. And after that he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." Here all the circumstances are minutely mentioned; and yet none of them specifically enjoined as our example—only the *moral quality* of the circumstances is made binding on the Christian church, and especially on the ministers of Christ.

The other case is given by Peter, in his first epistle and second chapter. He wished to enforce the submission of servants to their masters, "when they do well, and suffer for it"—"because Christ also suffered for us, *leaving us an example,* that ye should follow in his steps."[10] Here the

[10] This passage of Scripture is often quoted by the Baptists in defence of *immersion.* What has immersion to do with the meekness and gentleness of the Christian character enjoined by Peter?

meekness and gentleness of Christ's character are presented as an example. But it is impossible for men or angels to show forth gentleness and meekness by "following *the steps*" of Christ's sacrificial suffering while on earth. He has left us an example, *not of action*, but of *moral* quality—and this moral quality may be expressed under a thousand forms in all the ages of time. The same view may be taken of baptism. Its moral quality is all that is essential, which may be expressed by any mode, according to the judgment of the subject. Once more: unity is an essential feature of the Christian church. No matter how *modes* of administering the sacraments may vary, so the same moral quality is expressed. It is the moral quality of actions that secures the unity of the church, no mattter how various may be its branches. The *moral quality* of baptism, and *not the mode*, entitles the whole church of Christ to the most intimate and holy communion. Besides, we are to follow the example of Christ only in obeying the laws of morality and piety, and not in keeping and fulfilling *ceremonial* ordinances. Moreover, the confounding John's with Christian baptism is an error of no small moment. Paul censured the Hebrews severely for blending Judaism with Christianity; and the error of our Baptist brethren, in identifying John's with Christian baptism, is no less worthy of condemnation. On the whole, we conclude that no obligation can be imposed on the Christian church upon the ground of Christ's baptism, whether it respects the *fact* or the *mode* of his baptism. Obligation to be baptized, under the Christian dispensation, we repeat, rests upon the great commission of Christ to his apostles, given after his death and resurrection, "Go and teach all nations, *baptizing* them," &c., and upon the practice of the apostles themselves, who went forth to fulfil their commission.

Seventhly. "Immersion at the hands of an administrator who has not been immersed, is not valid baptism."

This objection is founded upon an assumption analogous to the exploded dogma of apostolic succession among the Episcopalians. The chain of succession in both cases—if any ever existed—is broken into a thousand fragments, and the links lie scattered irrecoverably among the promiscuous ruins of time; and hence both assumptions are to be regarded as utterly destitute of any consideration in settling the questions of episcopal ordination and the validity of clerical administrations. The whole weight of the objection entertained by the Baptists themselves against the tenet of episcopal succession, lies against their claims to exclusiveness in the administration of the sacraments, as a moment's consideration shall establish.

Upon a careful examination of all authoritative church history, it will be found that opposition to infant baptism commenced about the middle of the *twelfth* century, among a people "few, ignorant, and easily converted." The credibility of the authorities we shall adduce on this subject, has never been questioned by the Baptists themselves. The origin of the Baptist Church is thus described by Wall: "I take this Peter Bruis and Henry to be the first anti-pædobaptist preachers that ever set up a church or society of men holding that opinion against infant baptism, and rebaptizing such as had been baptized in infancy. They were both Frenchmen. Peter had had a church or parish, but was turned out of it for some misdemeanor. Henry had been a monk, and had deserted the monastery. Peter began to preach in 1126, and about the year 1144 was taken and burnt. As for Henry, after he had gone about preaching in many cities and provinces in France, whence he soon fled, and lying hid for some time, was taken and delivered to the bishop, (the Bishop of Ostia, I suppose,) but what was done

with him is not said."[11] "No sooner had the Reformation, begun by Luther, anno 1517, taken good footing in Saxony and some other parts of Germany, but that within some five or six years there arose a certain sort of men that pretended to refine upon him. One Nicodemus Storck, and Thomas Munzer, seconded within a while by one Hobmeir, preached that the baptism of infants was also an abuse that must be reformed; and they baptized over again such as became their disciples. They also added other things; that it was not fit, nor to be endured in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, that some should be so rich, and some so poor. Abundance of people flocked to them. Munzer called himself *the sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.* Luther and the Protestants entered their protestation against their proceedings, as bringing a scandal on the new begun Reformation; but they went on, and after some time (great numbers of disorderly people joining with them) became masterless, made a sort of army, and committed great ravages on the estates of rich men, where they marched. And at last, anno 1534, a strong party of this sort of men, coming mostly from Holland, seized on the city of Munster, where one John Becold, called John of Leyden, being advanced to be their king, they pretended to prophecy and revelation; and did, under the name of Christ's kingdom, practise several tyrannies and enormities, as polygamy,[12] plundering, &c. Some regular forces being brought against them, they were subdued, and the king, and some heads of them being put to death, the rest were dispersed into several parts of Germany.[13] That which is more

[11] Wall's History of Infant Baptism, vol. ii. 273–277.

[12] "As a demonstration of the soundness of his faith in this Christian liberty, Boccold, the successor of Matthias, took unto himself *fourteen wives*, one of whom was the widow of his predecessor, a woman of singular beauty." Robertson's Charles V. p. 54.

[13] See also Goodrich's History, and Ruter's Church History.

material to the history of infant baptism, is to inquire whether this Storck, Munzer, Hobmeir, &c. did at that time, viz. anno 1522, set up this thing new, or newly received, or whether it had been continued and handed down by some dispersed people, from the time of the Petrobrussians to this time. If there were any continuation of the doctrine for the said two or three hundred years, it must have been very obscure, and by a very few men, because there is in all that interval no mention of them in any good author. Menno succeeded, a countryman of Friezeland, a man of a sober and a quiet temper; he held the doctrine of antipædobaptism, disclaimed against the seditious doctrines and practices of those at Munster, and of Batenburg; and taught that the kingdom of Jesus Christ, which they had pretended to set up by external force, consisted in patience, and meekness, and suffering quietly, if occasion should be. One Theodoric succeeded Menno in this doctrine. The followers of Menno, to this day, generally call themselves Mennonites, or by abbreviation, Minnists. One thing Cassander says of Menno that is particular, viz.: 'Some of these men (followers of Menno) had first endeavored to fix the origin of infant baptism upon some pope of Rome: Menno had more sense. He was forced to own that it had been in use from the apostles' times. But he said that the false apostles were the authors of it.' As for the present state of the Minnists, a late writer of those parts, an extract of whose book is given by Mr. Boval, says, 'Except Holland, where they live peaceably, they are almost extinct.'

"In England there were now and then some Dutchmen found of the antipædobaptist opinion ever since the time it had taken footing in Holland; but more of the English nation are known to have embraced it in a long time after. In the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, *as there were no English antipædobaptists*, so there were very few left in Holland

At what time it began to be embraced by any English I do not find it easy to discover. But it is plain that no very considerable number in England were of this persuasion till about sixty years ago. Any very ancient man may remember when there was no Englishmen, or at least no society or church of them, of that persuasion. Their eldest churches are not yet of the age of man, viz. seventy years. I mean the ancient men or men of reading among them know this; the young and the vulgar, who will talk right or wrong for a side, do not own it; but the others own, and they justify it by pleading that their opinion is the truest."[14]

The Baptists of the present day do not like to be reminded of these men as their predecessors. But if these men were not their predecessors they have none, for they have never produced any other. Such is the history of the origin of the Baptist Church in Europe. We shall refer more at length to the origin of the Baptist Church in our examination of the rise and progress of opposition to infant baptism, in the latter part of this work.

The origin of the first Baptist church in England is thus described by Mr. Backus, a Baptist, and historian of the Baptist church in New England:—"A number of people near the borders of the counties of York, Nottingham, and Lincoln, were so much convinced of the corruptions of the Church of England, that they withdrew from her in 1602, and formed another church, in which they covenanted together to walk in all the ordinances and commandments of God, according to the light he had given, or should give them out of his holy word."[15] This the author calls the first Baptist church formed in England, and his account nearly coincides with the statement of Wall. Mr. Bene-

[14] Wall's History of Infant Baptism, vol. ii. 292–294, 300, 301, 302, 306, 313, 315, 317, 325, 557–558. First published in 1705.

[15] Backus's Church Hist. of N. England, c. i. 19.

dict's history of the origin of the first Baptist church in England is not only more comprehensive than that of Mr. Backus, but contains a refutation of the assumption we are considering. "John Smyth," says he, "a clergyman of the established church, went over to Holland in the beginning of the reign of James I. In his examinations of the Scriptures he soon perceived that neither infant baptism nor sprinkling had any foundation in them. *He was soon cast out of the church.* In a short time several were converted to his sentiments, and their numbers increasing rapidly, he formed them into a distinct church. THIS APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH *composed of Englishmen*, after the Reformation. It was formed about 1607 or 1608. It seems that Mr. Smyth and his friends were put to some difficulty in *reviving* the practice of *immersion*. HE AND ALL HIS DISCIPLES HAD BEEN SPRINKLED IN INFANCY; and therefore, according to their views, were unbaptized. What method he took is not very clearly stated. It is most probable that those who were convinced of the duty of believer's baptism, *first formed themselves into a church, and then appointed two of their number* TO BAPTIZE EACH OTHER, *and afterward to baptize the rest.*" And Mr. Benedict adds, "A similar difficulty occurred in the formation of the original Baptist church in America by Roger Williams, who had recourse to the same expedient; and we shall find, in the sequel of this history, that the good men of Leicestershire, in the middle of the last century, when placed in similar circumstances, ADOPTED THE SAME METHOD." Benedict's Hist. of the Baptists, pp. 327–330. It is now generally known and admitted that Roger Williams was the founder of the first Baptist church in America. The testimony is abundant. "Being settled in this place, which, from the kindness of God to them, they called Providence, Mr. Williams, and those with him, considered the importance

of gospel union, and were desirous of forming themselves into a church, but met with considerable obstruction. They were convinced of the nature and design of believer's baptism by *immersion,* but, from a variety of circumstances, had hitherto been prevented from submission. *To obtain a suitable administrator was a matter of consequence.* At length, the candidates for communion nominated and appointed *Ezekiel Holliman,* a man of gifts and piety, to *baptize Mr. Williams, and who in return baptized Mr. Holliman and the other ten."* [16] The same author, in a revised and enlarged edition of his work, published in 1848, concerning the same transaction, observes: "In 1639, he (Roger Williams) was baptized by Ezekiel Holliman, a LAYMAN who was appointed by the little company for the purpose. Then he baptized the rest of the company, and thus laid the foundation for the first Baptist church in Providence, and on the American continent. Some of our writers have taken no little pains to apologize for this unusual transaction, but in my opinion, IT WAS JUST SUCH A COURSE AS ALL COMPANIES OF BELIEVERS WHO WISH TO FORM A CHURCH IN SUCH EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD PURSUE." And he adds, "it would be difficult at this day to make a complete list of the Baptist communities which have sprung from this ancient and *prolific* mother." Pages 441, 442, 450, 459. This occurred in the year 1639, as is evident from the statement of the Baptist historians whom we have already quoted, and to whom we now again refer in the following extracts.

"Mr. Williams had been accused before of embracing principles which tended to *anabaptism;* and in March, 1639, he was baptized by one of his brethren, and then he baptized about ten more. But in *July following,* such

[16] Benedict's History of the Baptists, vol. i. 475

scruples were raised in his mind about it, that he refrained from such administrations among them. Mr. Williams discovers in his writings, that as sacrifices and other acts of worship were omitted by the people of God, while his temple lay in ruins; and that they were restored again by immediate direction from heaven, so that some such direction was necessary to restore the ordinances of baptism, and the supper, since the desolation of the church in mystical Babylon. But these cases are far from being parallel; for the altar of God, in one place in the land of Canaan, was the only place where acceptable sacrifices could then be offered; while the Christian church is not confined to any place, but Christ is with his saints wherever they meet in his name; and he says to his ministers, Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c., and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. And these promises being only unto the children of God, in the way of observing all his commandments, let them be ordained by whom they may. As the priests who could not find a *register* of their lawful descent from Aaron were put from the priesthood; so those who are born again are the only priesthood whom Christ owns under the gospel."[17] Such a baptism Mr. Williams himself considered worthless and invalid, and hence "refrained from such administrations" among his brethren, THEREBY INVALIDATING THE WHOLE SUCCESSION OF IMMERSIONISTS FROM HIM IN THIS COUNTRY.

That Mr. Williams regarded his baptism by Holliman invalid, is evident from other testimony. "Mr. Williams and many of his company, a few months since, were in all haste rebaptized, and denied communion with all others; and now he has come to question his *second* baptism, not being able to derive the authority for it from the apostles,

[17] Backus's Church Hist. New England, c. iii. 50, 51. Norton's Hist. of New England, published in 1669. Also, Winthrop's Journal.

otherwise than by the ministers of England, (whom he judged to be ill authority,) so as he conceived God would raise some apostolic power." Says Scott of Roger Williams, "I walked with him in the Baptist way, about three or four months, in which time he broke from the society, and declared at large the grounds and reasons of it, THAT THEIR BAPTISM COULD NOT BE RIGHT, because it was not administered by an apostle."[18] Thus, in March 1639, Roger Williams is rebaptized by a *layman;* in July of the same year, according to Backus, and in "three or four months" after, according to Scott, he becomes dissatisfied with his *second* baptism, and breaks from the society, because his baptism "was not administered by an apostle." Mr. Backus, however, opposes the views and course adopted by Roger Williams subsequently to his rebaptism, and makes a strong but fruitless effort to establish its validity. He makes a rule, unsupported by reason, Scripture, or the practice of the church, by which he wishes to establish the exclusive authority of the Baptist ministry to administer the sacraments of Christianity. The rule is this: "The promises of God belong only to his children, in the way of obeying all his commandments, let them be ordained by whom they may." But who baptized Roger Williams? Why, Deacon Holliman, a *layman*, baptized by *sprinkling, in infancy.* And in order to indicate the authority of this layman to baptize, Mr. Backus observes: "Those who are born again are the only priesthood whom Christ owns under the gospel." But being born again, is not a sufficient ground of authority to "ordain" and baptize. It is an indispensable prerequisite to the validity of baptism, that the administrator be called,

[18] Winthrop's Journal. Knowles's Memoir of R. Williams, pp. 170, 171, as quoted in a small tract entitled, "An Inquiry into the Antiquity of the Baptist Church. By Geo. W. Langhorne, of the Virginia Conference,"—a masterly refutation of the objection we are considering.

and sent, by the Holy Ghost, *to preach* the gospel. "Go ye into all the world, and *preach* my gospel to every creature, *baptizing* them, &c." And Mr. Backus himself refers to this great commission as the divine authority of the minister of Christ to administer the sacraments. But Ezekiel Holliman was a *layman*, and consequently under no circumstances, was he a proper person to administer the sacrament of baptism.[19] Roger Williams had sense enough to discover this flaw in his rebaptism, and so repudiated it altogether, and dissolved his connection with the church erected upon so spurious a foundation. Here, then, in the first place, the first administrator of baptism is a *layman*. Nor is this all: this administrator was baptized by *sprinkling*. Nor is this all: he was baptized in *infancy*. Nor is this all: Mr. Williams himself subsequently acknowledged his mistake in the whole matter, and withdrew from the society of Holliman. Nor is this all: Mr. Backus observes, "that he (Williams) was introduced into the ministry in the Church of England, but he soon fonnd that he could not in conscience conform to many things in their worship, and therefore came over to this country, and arrived at Boston, in February, in 1631:"[20] so the Baptist church in this country primarily originated in the Church of England! Nor is this all: where was the Baptist Church for *sixteen hundred and thirty-nine years?* Professor Knowles declares, that Roger Williams "founded the *first* Baptist church in America, and

[19] In no circumstances of necessity can a layman assume authority to administer the sacraments. The only proper administrator is the man who is called of God *to preach* the gospel; and if there be no proper authority in the church to ordain him to the offices of his holy calling, he may proceed *de novo*, to administer the sacraments, and do all the work of the ministry. Ezekiel Holliman was not so called, and consequently Roger Williams's rebaptism was radically defective.

[20] Hist. Church New England, p. 35.

the second, as it is stated, in the British Empire."[21] Consequently there was no Baptist church in America, or in the British Empire, *before* these churches were founded!

The history of Roger Williams, as the founder of the Baptist Church in America, involves the Baptist Church in inextricable perplexity, because, at a single stroke, it overthrows *ab origine* the Baptist Church, and invalidates all the subsequent administrations of the Baptist clergy, whether of ordination, baptism, the eucharist, preaching, or any other service, constitutionally or conventionally connected with the office of the properly authenticated minister of Christ. We have seen the fruitless effort of Mr. Backus to prevent these disastrous consequences. Mr. Broaddus, an eminent Baptist minister of Virginia, in his reply to "Slicer on Baptism," also attempts to destroy the force of this deduction. But he is more unfortunate than Mr. Backus, for he admits that all *pædobaptist* ministers are qualified to administer the sacraments. "I grant, sir," says he, "that if a man had not been immersed, he may immerse others, and his neglect of his own duty, may not disqualify him from assisting in discharge of others." Therefore, Slicer replies, "Elder Broaddus being judge, *all* pædobaptist ministers are qualified to give the ordinance by immersion." Though immersion were in truth the only valid mode of baptism—though all we have said of other modes of baptism were contrary to reason and the Scriptures—though the Baptist ministry were descended from the apostles by an unbroken and consecutive chain of *immersionists*—though the whole history of the recent origin of the Baptist Church in Europe and America were utterly false—and though infant baptism, sprinkling, and pouring, were innovations made by the pædobaptist church—yet, according to Mr. Broaddus, *im-*

[21] Memoir of Williams, p. 165.

mersion at the hands of a pædobaptist minister is valid baptism. And thus, the objection, "Immersion at the hands of an administrator, who has not been immersed, is not valid baptism," is refuted by the history and concessions of the Baptist Church. The history of Roger Williams is a standing refutation of the bold assumption of the Baptist Church in our country to exclusive right to administer the sacraments of Christianity. He pretended to no commission directly from heaven *to baptize by immersion.* He wrought no miracle to establish his claims. So far from it, he regards his rebaptism at the hands of Holliman invalid, "because it was not administered by an apostle." Roger Williams was neither an apostle, nor baptized by an apostle, but by a layman, and he even repudiated the ministration of this layman. Nor did he assume the right to do the work of the ministry *de novo*—had he done so, even then the whole question of the exclusive validity of immersion were open for discussion.

The "Missouri Baptist" is not more successful than Mr. Backus and Mr. Broaddus in meeting this difficulty. "Under other circumstances they would gladly have availed themselves of a regular administrator of the ordinance; but situated as they were, they naturally and wisely concluded that he who requireth this service will not annex conditions incompatible with their obedience, and, of course, will accept of their *right intention* in the performance." Right intention! Then all the ministrations of pædobaptists are valid, for they believe that immersion is a valid mode of baptism. Lapse of time cannot constitute an ordinance valid which was invalid in the beginning, and invalidity is transmitted throughout the succession of the Baptist ministry in this country.

Perplexity is now extreme. But hope beams faintly from another quarter. We are told that the line of succession

was transported from Europe to America. And suppose it was—the exotic is as spurious as the native plant. Was Peter de Bruis an apostle? No. And who baptized him? Cannot tell. Was Munzer an apostle, or in regular succession by ordination from the apostles? No. And who baptized him? Cannot tell. The darkness is impenetrable. Who was the founder of the Baptist Church in Europe? In what part of the world, in what age, and under what circumstances did he exist? If the pages of history reveal the truth, no better origin of the Baptist Church and ministry in our country can be given than what we have given. If a better origin existed than what we have presented, it would have been adduced by Mr. Backus, who wrote the early history of the Baptist Church in New England. Let us then refer again to the pages of this Baptist historian, who has given such satisfactory information respecting the foundation of "the *first* Baptist church in America, and in the British Empire."

The origin of the *second* Baptist church in America. "Mr. John Clarke was a preacher of the gospel at Newport, until he formed a Baptist Church there in 1644, which has continued by succession ever since."[22] Who was John Clarke? and whence did he derive authority to transmit a "succession" of clerical ordinations from Newport? The circumstances of his baptism and ordination are wholly omitted. In the "Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge," it is stated, "Mr. Clarke was soon employed as a preacher, and in 1644 he formed a church at Newport and became its pastor. This was the *second* Baptist Church which was established in America."[23] We have no information concerning his immersion. Like Roger Williams, it is very probable, his authority to baptize commenced with himself.

[22] Backus's Church History, c. iii. 52. [23] P. 379.

The *third* Baptist church in America. "While Mr Clarke was in England, a new Baptist church was formed out of the first church in Newport, holding to the laying on of hands after baptism, about the year 1656, which was the *third* Baptist church in America, and is still continued by succession."[24] Whether the "succession" from this church be from the administrations of Mr. Clarke, or otherwise, it is doubtful and immaterial, as must at once be obvious to the reader.

The *fourth* Baptist church in America. "The first Baptist church in Wales was formed near Swansea, in that country, in 1649. Mr. John Miles was their chief leader, and they increased to about three hundred members, by the year 1662, when he was ejected out of his place by a cruel act of parliament, which turned two thousand teachers out of their places in one day, for refusing fully to conform with the Church of England." Here then the first Baptist church in Wales grew up in the Church of England, and dates its origin in the year 1649. Mr. Backus proceeds: "He (John Miles) then came over with the book of the records he had kept there, and it remains in our Swansea to this day. And at the house of John Butterworth, in Rehoboth, in 1663, John Miles, elder, James Brown, and several others, covenanted together as a church of Christ, to obey him in all his ordinances and commandments. In 1667, the court granted them the town of Swansea, where the church has continued by succession ever since, and is the *fourth* Baptist church in America."[25] Thus, the succession of ministers, whoever they were, from the *fourth* Baptist church in America, is derived from the Church of England, and hence is no better than the pædobaptist succession derived from the same church.

[24] Backus's Church History, pp. 108–109. [25] Ibid. 93–94.

The *fifth* Baptist church in America. "The fifth was formed in Massachusetts," under the following circumstances. A certain Thomas Gould, it seems, had a child born in 1656, and "could not bring him to be sprinkled." He was willing, however, to commune with the church in Charlestown, "if they would let him do it without carrying his child to an ordinance which he had no faith in." But they could come to no compromise. "At length three Baptist brethren came over from England, recommended from churches there, and met him and others in private houses. And on May 28, 1665, Thomas Gould and others joined in solemn covenant, &c.;" [26] and thus originated the *fifth* Baptist church in America. Here is Thomas Gould, a *layman*, and with him, "three Baptist brethren from England," most probably *laymen*, as Mr. Backus generally designates the office in the church when the person is an elder—and these *laymen* become the founders of the fifth Baptist church in America—a source of succession radically defective.

The *sixth* Baptist church in America. "A small church was formed out of that (the church in Newport) in December, 1671, holding to the seventh-day Sabbath, which yet continues. This made the *sixth* Baptist church in America." [27] The origin of the church in Newport has already been considered.

Thus, these six original Baptist churches in America derived their origin from the Church of England, immediately or remotely, by separation or ejectment, through elders or laymen, and so, in some cases, succession is radically defective, in others only a regular pædobaptist succession—in all wholly destitute of succession from the apostles, which alone could support the assumption of exclusive right to administer baptism by immersion. Therefore,

[26] Backus's Church History, p. 94, 95. [27] Ibid. 109.

the Baptist church cannot deny the validity of the administrations of the pædobaptist churches, without invalidating her own. Further, if regular clerical ordination be indispensable to the validity of baptism, then *immersion* by a *pædobaptist* minister is preferable to immersion at the hands of a *Baptist* minister, *since the founders of the pædobaptist churches were* REGULARLY ORDAINED ELDERS, *while the founders of the Baptist Church were, for the most part,* LAYMEN, *having no authority to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments.*

Indeed, the whole question before us is surrendered in the unqualified and candid concessions of Mr. Benedict, who is the highest historical authority among the Baptists; and the reader, I am sure, will be not a little surprised at the following extracts from the "History of the Baptists" by this celebrated author. He first gives "one line of the Baptist succession," as follows:—

	Date.		Date.
Waldenses and Ricards.	1450	Gundulphians	1025
Hussites	1420	Paterines	945
Waldo and his followers	1176	Vaudois	714
Arnoldists	1150	Paulicians	653
Henricians	1140	Donatists	311
Petrobrussians	1135	Novatians	250
Berengarians	1049	(See page 47, note.)	

This, Mr. Benedict calls "one line or chain of Baptist succession," in which no *two links are united,* as he admits himself in the following pages. Hear him: "The Novatians *broke off* from the Church of *Rome* in 250;—the Donatists *began* their operations at *Carthage,* a little after 300;—the Paulicians *arose* within the bounds of the *Greek* Church about the middle of the *seventh* century;—the *Paterines began in Italy* in the *tenth* century;—the Waldenses and Albigenses became more publicly known about 1165;—the

Petrobrussians *arose* in the South of *France* about 1110;—Berengarius, the founder of the Berengarians, *arose* in *France* 1050;—Henry, the founder of the Henricians, appears as a *reformer* about 1116;—Arnold, the founder of the Arnoldists, appears as a *reformer* about 1137;—the Hussites, so named from John Huss, who appeared in the character of a *reformer* in 1407." (Pp. 51–53.) And he observes (p. 50) of these reformers, "*they were all* DISSENTERS *from the great national churches.*" Dissenters! then they were all baptized IN INFANCY, and consequently they must have baptized *themselves* in order to become *reformers* in the sense of Mr. Benedict. Each instance of dissent was a *new era*, and furnished a *new origin*. And Mr. Benedict, in this particular, is the most consistent and candid Baptist historian on record. Says he, "I SHALL NOT ATTEMPT TO TRACE A CONTINUOUS LINE OF CHURCHES, as we can for a *few centuries past* in Europe and America. *This is a kind of succession* TO WHICH WE HAVE NEVER LAID CLAIM; *and of course*, WE MAKE NO EFFORT TO PROVE IT. WE PLACE NO KIND OF RELIANCE ON THIS SORT OF TESTIMONY *to establish the* SOUNDNESS *of our faith, or the* VALIDITY *of our administrations.*" (P. 51.) Well done, Benedict! the contest is ended!—and never let the Baptists question again "the soundness of the faith, or the validity of the administrations" of their pædobaptist brethren. And yet one quotation more.

Dr. Wayland, one of the most distinguished divines of the Baptist Church in America, observes: "It is convenient, as a matter of church order, that there should be some general rule, and that this rite be administered by a clergyman, *and it would be naturally performed by one who had himself been baptized by immersion.* But if those things be absent from necessity or ignorance, they alter not the fact that the person who has been immersed on profession of faith, is, as I understand it, a baptized believer. This is a very common

case with us in this city. Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and Methodists, here, quite frequently baptize persons on profession of their faith. We consider them as baptized believers, and when they request it, admit them upon a simple relation of their experience. Indeed, were not this admitted, I know not to what absurdities we should be reduced. If the obedience of Christ depends upon the ordinance being administered by a regular baptized administrator, *where are we to stop, and how shall we know who is regularly baptized; or who has obeyed Christ?* All this looks to me absolutely trivial, and wholly aside from the principles which, as Protestants and Baptists, we have always considered as essential to Christian liberty. It seems to me assuming Puseyism under another name; or, in fact, going back to the ecclesiastical errors of the Catholic Church. Such are my views. How they meet the views of others I know not, but to me these principles of Christian freedom are above all price." This high authority shows that the Baptists themselves admit the validity of immersion at the hands of a pædobaptist minister who has not been baptized by immersion, and therefore persons in the pædobaptist churches, who have been immersed by pædobaptist ministers, have been properly baptized. Thus, this old, plausible, and popular objection falls to the ground.

But this is not all. If the pædobaptist minister who has not been immersed may administer valid baptism, one of the sacraments, he may administer the Lord's supper also, the other sacrament; and preach the truth as it is in Christ; and have the pastoral oversight of the flock of Christ; in a word, do all the work of the minister of Christ. There is no more reason why the Baptists should decline receiving the communion at the hands of a pædobaptist minister, than there is that they should decline communing with persons who have been immersed by a pædobaptist minister. This

much at least is conceded by the Baptists themselves—that all in the pædobaptist churches who have been immersed, have been validly baptized; and consequently, that all such may as validly receive the Lord's supper at the hands of pædobaptist ministers; and as the Baptists themselves have been immersed, they also may receive the Lord's supper in the pædobaptist churches, without sin, and without blame, upon their own principles—and we welcome them all to the enjoyment of the privilege.

Eighthly. It has been said by the Baptists, and the reader probably has seen the declaration, that "as late as 1643, in the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, sprinkling was substituted for immersion by a majority of ONE—twenty-five voting for sprinkling, and twenty-four for immersion. This small majority was obtained by the earnest request of Dr. Lightfoot, who had acquired great influence in that Assembly." This statement of the matter is an entire misrepresentation, as we shall now prove. 1. Dr. Lightfoot, in his journal, says, that the matter in dispute was, "*sprinkling being granted, whether dipping should be tolerated with it.*" The question was, not whether sprinkling should be substituted for immersion, for sprinkling was all along received as lawful, but whether immersion also should be admitted as valid. In a word, the question was, shall "DIPPING BE EXCLUDED," and sprinkling be invariably practised. Twenty-four voted against excluding immersion; that is, against prohibiting immersion to those who might prefer it. As in the present day, the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches leave the choice of mode with the subject of baptism, so the twenty-four above voted that the same privilege might be granted to the subject in their day; and hence, it can no more be maintained that the Assembly wished to substitute sprinkling for immersion, than it can be maintained, that any in the present day, who prefer

sprinkling to immersion, wish to substitute sprinkling in its place. Suppose a case:—The question comes up before the legislative or General Conference of the Methodist Church—"Sprinkling being received as lawful, shall we admit immersion also as lawful?" That is, *all* admit the lawfulness of sprinkling, but some vote to allow immersion to those who may prefer it to sprinkling. No *substitution* is proposed, only the vote of *preference* in certain cases is carried. And so in the Westminster Assembly, twenty-four voted that the right of preference might be granted to the subject. And yet these twenty-four, the minority, did not deny the validity of *sprinkling* to those who might prefer it to immersion, as we shall now see. 2 When the proposition was put in such a form as include the *lawfulness* of *immersion* in the cases of those who might prefer it, the Assembly, "with great unanimity," declared, that as to the mode of baptizing, it is "not only *lawful* but also *sufficient*, and *most expedient*, to be by POURING *or* SPRINKLING water on the face of the child, without adding any other ceremony." Now, how is it possible to believe, that twenty-four voted against *substituting* sprinkling for immersion, and yet should vote for the *lawfulness*, *sufficiency*, and *expediency* of sprinkling? 3. But nothing final was determined by the vote. "After that vote," says Lightfoot, "when we had done all, we concluded nothing about it, but the business was recommitted." 4. We have other evidence in the premises. The time when this vote was taken is 1643. Now twenty-three years before this time, the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, and nineteen years after their landing, Roger Williams, the founder of the Baptist Church in America, was immersed by Holliman. If immersion had been the common practice, the Pilgrim fathers would have brought it with them, and no difficulty then would have existed in the mind of Roger Williams for the want of a proper administrator. Besides,

Richard Blount, in the reign of King Charles II., went from England to the Netherlands to be immersed, and then returned, that he might place the Baptist Church on what he deemed the proper foundation. Could these two events have happened in Baptist history, had sprinkling been substituted for immersion but a few years before?

Ninthly. "Immersion is baptism, and hence it is absurd to talk of a mode of baptism." The passage of Scripture, "One Lord, one faith, and one baptism," is often adduced in support of this objection. In the first place, it is begging the question, to say that *immersion* is the baptism referred to in this scripture. In the second place, the Scriptures speak of "baptism."[28] In the third place, the meaning of the "one baptism" is wholly misunderstood by the objector. It comprehends spiritual baptism, which is of the Holy Ghost, and outward formal baptism, which is "of water,"[29] both agreeing in *one and the same design*, namely, consecration to the service of God. Here are two baptisms, the one typifying the other. Thus, there are two kinds of faith, historical and saving, and yet they both agree in the end, and are parts of the "*one* faith." And there are *three* persons in the Godhead, but they are the "*one* Lord." In the fourth place, if baptism do not admit of mode, how can it be administered at all? If baptism imply action of any kind, action is the mode of baptism. And thus, if immersion is baptism, immersion is the mode of immersion, which is absurd—that is, the sacrament, and the mode of administering it, are one and the same thing, which is absurd. The nature and design of baptism are essentially distinct from the mode of baptism; and the nature and design being supposed, then the proper subject, the proper administrator, the proper form, and any mode agreeable to

[28] Heb. vi. 2. [29] John iii. 5.

the subject, are essential to the proper observance of the ordinance. As baptism properly means a washing, this washing must be set forth by some mode, but the meaning of baptism, and the mode of baptism, are different things. But if *baptizo* has the exclusive meaning of *immerse*, and signifies nothing but action, *then it has no meaning in a gospel sense.* That is, if it mean nothing but *immerse*, and you cannot separate the action from the meaning, nor add any other meaning to the word, then the ordinance is nothing but a senseless ceremony, which were to exclude it from the Christian dispensation. If however *wash* be admitted as the meaning of *baptizo*, then any mode that shall set forth this meaning, may be adopted without invalidating other modes that set forth the same thing.

Tenthly. "*There is no* CROSS *in sprinkling.*" It is urged that there is a cross in being immersed, and, therefore, immersion is to be preferred to sprinkling. Groundless as this assertion really is, it is surprising to see what an influence it has over many sincere Christians. A partial examination will be enough to convince us that in this instance the Baptists confound the cross of Christ, in a true scriptural sense, with a spontaneous or constitutional repugnance to being plunged into water—a resistance wholly physical and instinctive—not having in it any reluctance of a moral nature. Thus, in a frigid zone, and in our own climate in certain seasons of the year, it is perfectly *natural* to shrink from being immersed in cold water; while in a torrid zone, and in our own climate in the summer, the languishing system instinctively desires the use of the cool, refreshing water. Besides, in the case of the delicate and refined female, there is the instinctive timidity and repugnance of her sex to be taken into the question, in the case of immersion at any time, but especially in the sight of men. In a word, what is here called a cross is nothing more than an instinctive or

natural propensity to resist any sudden hazard of our safety which God himself has implanted in our constitution—an instinct wholly involuntary, and without the co-operation of the will, reason, or the sense of duty, and which, when permitted to control, often utterly precludes that devotional serenity of mind which is indispensable to the proper discharge of religious obligation. In all this there is not one element essential to the idea of "the cross," or the duty of "taking up the cross," in the scriptural sense of the terms. The Baptists imagine they find a cross where, in the nature of things, there can be none. There can be no cross where there is no duty; and there may be suffering where there is no cross. It must first be proved that immersion is made binding upon the believer, before the idea of "the cross" can enter into immersion. But this is the very point in question; and to argue from an instinctive repugnance to being immersed to the obligation to be immersed, is begging the question. It would be just as logical to argue that because man has an instinctive repugnance to putting his hand into the fire, therefore it is his duty to put his hand into the fire. But prove that it is his duty, in any specific case, as in martyrdom, to submit to the operation of fire, and it becomes a cross to do so, that is, he must resist the natural repugnance to fire for Christ's sake: "for whosoever shall save his life shall lose it." Again, it would be just as logical to argue that because man has an instinctive repugnance to death, therefore it is his duty to destroy his life. But prove, first, that it is his duty to die in any specific case, as for "Christ," or "the brethren," and it becomes "a cross" to do so; that is, he must resist the instinctive repugnance to death for the sake of Christ, or the brethren: "if any man will come after me, let him *deny himself* and *take up his cross* and follow me, for—whosoever shall lose his life *for my sake* shall find it." Matt. xvi. 24–25. Why, in such a case, should a

man resist his repugnance to death and consent to die? Because it is made his *duty* to do so. Where it is *not* his duty to sacrifice life, instinctive repugnance to death cannot be made the basis of "a cross," but is an impulse wisely implanted in our nature for the *preservation* of life during God's good pleasure. To make the cases analogous, and so make out "a cross" in immersion, the Baptists must first prove that immersion, as the mode of baptism, is solemnly enjoined as a *duty* upon every believer. But this is the very point in controversy—a point to be settled before "a cross," in the proper sense of the term, can be recognised in immersion. Thus, until immersion be proved to be enjoined as a duty, it is denied that there is, properly speaking, any "cross" in immersion, and so the objection utterly fails.

Eleventhly. We come now to the accommodating argument of the Baptists, which we shall state in the fairest light, and consider at length. "All orthodox denominations agree that immersion is a valid mode; but all do not agree that sprinkling and pouring are valid modes; therefore, that is the best mode about which all agree. In other words: the four prominent denominations of Christians agree that immersion is a valid mode, while but three of them agree that sprinkling and pouring are valid modes; therefore there can be no doubt with regard to the validity of immersion." This is the most plausible, captivating, and popular argument ever adduced in favor of immersion; yet never was there an argument more sophistical and unsound. It is rendered the more plausible by the familiar illustration of three deeds or notes, representing the three popular modes of baptism, namely, sprinkling, pouring, and immersion. Four judges attest to the validity of one of the deeds, while three of the judges declare that both of the other deeds are just as good. Three of the judges say there can be no doubt of the genuineness of two of the notes, while one of

the judges says they are counterfeit altogether: but all four judges agree that the genuineness of one of the notes is unquestionable. Therefore, the deed or note whose genuineness is attested to by all the judges is preferable to the notes or deeds which are sustained by only three of the judges. All this we pronounce to be sophistry, which a moment's honest reflection may expose.

The sophistry in the argument is this: the Baptists confound the admission of the validity of immersion as *a* mode of baptism, with their own views of its *exclusiveness*. They lose sight of their *particular* dogma in the *general* admission of the pædobaptists. The pædobaptists as strenuously oppose the *exclusive* validity of immersion as the Baptists do the validity of sprinkling and pouring. There is no unanimity among the judges. He that is baptized by immersion, vainly imagining that he is confirmed in his opinion by the corroborating admission of the pædobaptists, does in fact set aside the judgment of *three* of the judges. But he who is baptized by immersion, believing it to be a valid mode, and at the same time admitting the equal validity of sprinkling and pouring, is confirmed in his opinions and practice by the judgment of three of the judges, and supported by the concession of the fourth judge in the case. For the Baptists have been forced to concede, as we have seen, that immersion at the hands of a pædobaptist is valid baptism; and, therefore, the four judges agree in the validity of immersion at the hands of a pædobaptist, while the man who believes in exclusive immersion is supported by only *one* of the judges. It is admitted that immersion is valid; but this is not admitted upon the ground occupied by the Baptists, namely, *exclusiveness* of immersion, but because mere mode is regarded as not essential; and hence the validity of immersion at the hands of a Baptist does not support their pretensions, nor destroy the validity of immer-

sion at the hands of a pædobaptist. Immersion is as valid at the hands of a pædobaptist as it is at the hands of a Baptist, because the validity of immersion, as we have seen, does not depend upon the manner by which the administrator himself was baptized, and thus the note or deed is as good in the hands of the pædobaptist as it is in the hands of the Baptist.

The only question now to be considered respects the testimony of the judges concerning the validity of sprinkling and pouring. Three of the judges regard them as valid modes, and one of the judges does not so regard them; hence the weight of testimony is in favor of sprinkling and pouring. Besides, he who admits the validity of these modes, and yet prefers immersion, may obtain it in a valid form at the hands of a pædobaptist. Indeed, upon the principles of the Baptists he may obtain immersion at the hands of a pædobaptist by a more regular succession than he can at the hands of a Baptist—the Baptists themselves being judges. Moreover, immersion at the hands of a pædobaptist obtains all the advantages of free and open communion. The Baptists cannot deny this without unchurching themselves and invalidating their own administrations. Indeed, upon the principles of the Baptists, they have no right to administer the sacraments at all, and no ground on which to sustain the dogma of "close communion," since the doctrine of exclusive immersion is not of apostolic origin and succession, and the *original* immersions of the Baptist Church were administered by *laymen*—as has been proved. Nor is this all: upon the principles of the Baptists, they are not properly constituted a judge in the premises, and the question must be left with the proper judges for final settlement.

The sophism of the Baptists under consideration is analogous to two very familiar sophisms in the religious world,

one of the Jews, and the other of the Romish church. That of the Jews: "Both Jews and Christians confess that the religion of Moses came from God; but the Jews do not believe in the divinity of the Christian religion; the safest way, therefore, is to hold what both sides believe as true." And yet no one becomes a Jew from the force of this conclusion. The sophism of the Papist: "Both the Romanists and the Reformed believe salvation may be had in the Church of Rome; but the Romanists do not believe it may be had in the churches of the Reformed: therefore, it is safest to adhere to Popery." And yet who becomes a Romanist from the force of this conclusion? The sophism of the Baptists: "The Baptist and pædobaptist churches believe that immersion is valid; but the Baptist Church does not believe in the validity of sprinkling and pouring; therefore, the safest mode of baptism is that of immersion." And many, very many are convinced by this sophism in favor of immersion, though there is no more reason in it than is contained in the sophisms above. The fact, that the great majority of Christians in the world are *not* Jews, and the powerful arguments written in defence of Christianity, effectually refute the sophism of the Jews: the revolutions of Divine Providence, the rapid progress and unparalleled prosperity of Protestant nations, and the testimony of enlightened generations, combine to refute the sophism of the Papists: and so the united testimony of the pædobaptist churches, from apostolic times to the present, fairly refutes the sophism of the Baptists. Indeed, the concession of the Baptists, that immersion at the hands of a pædobaptist is valid baptism, invests immersion so administered with all the force of the Baptists' idea of *exclusiveness*, and thus in fact the concession alone refutes the favorite sophism of the Baptists; for immersion at the hands of a pædobaptist is conceded by the Baptists to be valid, and

consequently immersion, one of the deeds, may be obtained in a genuine form in the pædobaptist churches.[30]

Before closing our consideration of the mode of baptism, we will make one more remark. To prefer immersion as *a mode* of baptism is admissible, but to regard it as *the only valid* mode of baptism is *superstitious*. In the former case it is preferring a mode in itself non-essential, but in the latter case it is investing an external rite with a virtue exclusively inherent in itself—and this is elemental in Popery. The efficacy of an ordinance depends solely upon the influence of the Holy Ghost that accompanies or follows its administration, irrespective of the mode. The benefit of an ordinance does not originate in any essential connection of the mode with the ordinance, but in the divine blessing alone, imparted at the time of administration or thereafter; and, therefore, we infer that *mode* is non-essential; and that exclusiveness is not only superstitious, but dangerous, since superstition tends to abuse. It betrays "unwary souls" into a delusive confidence. Immersion, as an external rite, and its concomitant error, "*close communion*," are the prominent characteristics of the Baptist Church; and wherever this is the case there is danger of sectarian idolatry, and superstitious reliance in rites and ceremonies. Exclusive immersion is a "yoke of bondage," which the Baptists have

[30] We will here correct a misrepresentation often made by the Baptists, in public and in private, "that while the pædobaptists immerse, they do not believe in the validity of immersion." Why, the Baptists proceed, in the sophism above, upon the pædobaptists' *admission* of the validity of immersion, and it is ungenerous now to charge them with insincerity. Besides, we have only to refer the reader to our Discipline. "Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice either of immersion, sprinkling, or pouring." Methodist Discipline, p. 76. See also "Ministration of Baptism to Infants," ibid. p. 110. Also, "to adults," ibid. p. 115. The same references may be made to the Protestant Episcopal Prayer Book.

"added" to the "necessary" things contained in the Book of Life. To this tendency is to be ascribed in part that miserable, pernicious, and destructive heresy of baptismal regeneration, which has recently sprung up in the Baptist Church, and has extended to an alarming and melancholy extent, particularly in the Western country—a heresy, like all other heresies, at once gloomy, mournful, and desperate—I mean *Campbellism*. To the same source is to be ascribed the spirit of controversy on infant baptism, and immersion, which certain persons often commence in times of gracious revivals in the churches, when penitents should rather first be encouraged in seeking pardon, and young converts be settled in Christian experience and in things essential to their present peace and fitness for the sacramental seal, than have their minds perplexed, as they sometimes are, about a mere external rite, which obtrusive zeal itself admits is not essential to salvation. "*The river, the river,*" really seems by some to be placed in the room of "the Saviour"—and often the young and fearful conscience has been injudiciously directed to the imagined necessity of being buried by baptism *under water*, before the heart has become prepared to be "buried by baptism into death."

PART III.

Infant Baptism.

CHAPTER I.

THE GROUND OF INFANT BAPTISM.

It is surprising that the right of infants to baptism ever should have been contested, or been made the cause of division in the church, under whose maternal care they are placed by Christ, and at whose altar they are presented by Christ as a model of piety and obedience to man. Nothing but blessing is connected with their early dedication to God in baptism. The universal formal recognition of the validity and obligation of infant baptism, with the proper subsequent instructions, would be attended with spiritual advantages to the infant, the church, and the world, obtained from no other means.

It is the disposition of man to be self-deceived; and when once deception has induced mental habit, it is easy to shrink from an impartial and patient investigation of opposite ground, and difficult to relinquish opinions long and fondly cherished. We despair of communicating any information to those who may read the following pages with a predetermination to reject every thing that may be in opposition to their views. We beseech the reader not to embrace or oppose what may be presented, merely because it is consistent or not with his opinions, but according as it appears to be true or false. We shall proceed carefully in the examina-

tion of the deeply interesting subject before us, under the statement of the following general proposition: THE GROUND OF INFANT SALVATION IS THE GROUND OF INFANT BAPTISM. We shall consider first, the ground of infant salvation.

1. THE GROUND OF INFANT SALVATION.

The ground of salvation is the atonement of Christ, as we have seen in a former part of this work. In the Divine government, the distribution of rewards and punishments is conditional. But on this ground, infants can receive neither reward nor punishment, since the *conditionality* of salvation is not applicable to them. That is, on the ground of conditionality, infants can neither be saved nor be lost, since the principles of free agency are inapplicable to their case. The infant cannot believe, therefore he cannot be saved; he cannot sin, therefore he cannot be lost. Had no provision been made to meet this difficulty, infidelity might have proposed this unanswerable objection to the church: "What becomes of infants? They cannot believe, therefore they cannot be saved; they cannot sin, and therefore they cannot be lost. And since no provision has been made for them, what becomes of innocent, helpless, unconscious infants?" Had Christ, in the Old and the New Testaments, left the question of infant salvation here, the church and the world might weep in mournful silence over the final destiny of all children dying in infancy. Indeed there is a sect,[1] that has surpassed infidelity in insensibility, and declared that all infants dying in infancy are *annihilated.* But Christ, that he might protect the church against this appalling dilemma, as well as confound infidelity, in mercy has said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, *for of such is the kingdom of heaven*—and he

[1] The *Thomasites,* a branch of the Campbellites.

took them in his arms, and blessed them." In this comprehensive declaration, their salvation is *unconditionally* secured. And as Christ simply announced divine truths, established them by miracles, and then left them as great elemental doctrines of salvation for his apostles to explain more at large, we have the explanation and vindication of infant salvation clearly set forth by the apostle Paul: "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."[2] That is, all the unconditional evils involved in the sin of Adam are, in the case of infants dying in infancy, unconditionally removed by the death of Christ: dying, they are regenerated, sanctified, and exalted to heaven, without faith; and living, they unconditionally obtain a gracious aid, by which, in due time, as free agents, they may conditionally obtain "justification unto life." As in the original creation of man, God so arranged the system of relations, that all Adam's posterity should be legally connected with him as their federal head, so in his infinite wisdom, he has constituted the redemptive system of relations in such a manner that Christ becomes the second Adam. By the union of *divinity with humanity*, on the laws of grace, and under the sanctions of justice, in offering up himself as a sacrifice for Adam's transgression, Christ transfers the federal representation of children from Adam to himself, and on this ground he unconditionally justifies and saves all infants dying in infancy. The plan of grace substitutes this gracious connection in the place of the legal connection which subsisted in the first creation. That is, in order to prevent the dreadful consequences of legal union with Adam as a federal head, under the operation of the moral law involved in sin under the Adamic

[2] Rom. v. 18.

law, Christ, uniting himself with *humanity*, associates the *human race with himself*, and so unconditionally justifies all infants while in an infant state, saves all without exception, who die in infancy, and qualifies all for the relations of responsibility, who live to a responsible age. In a word, in view of the efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse and sanctify all dying in infancy; in view of the agency of the Holy Spirit in unconditionally regenerating all who die in infancy, that they may be qualified for heaven; and in view of their right, on these grounds, to the kingdom of heaven, Christ declares, in the tenderest mercy—"Of such is the kingdom of heaven." In a word, the ground of infant salvation is the *sacrificial death* of Christ.

2. THE GROUND OF INFANT SALVATION IS THE GROUND OF INFANT BAPTISM. That is, *the institution of infant baptism, as expressive of the interest of infants in the atonement of Christ, is founded upon the atonement of Christ: their right to initiation into the Church of Christ, under the Christian dispensation, is founded upon the atonement of Christ.* We shall present the argument at some length.

It is not surprising that there should be various opinions respecting the ground of the right of infants to baptism, since men's views of baptism correspond to their theological doctrines, sound or unsound. And yet it is obvious, that those views of infant baptism only are correct, which are in harmony with evangelical truth. A statement, and brief consideration of the prominent views maintained on the subject, may not only be interesting to the general reader, but contribute materially to the establishment of the doctrine of infant baptism. These opinions are the following.

First. That the right of infants to baptism "depends upon previous election by God to salvation." Goode on Baptism, p. 34. As in the very nature of evangelical truth, the same objections exist against infant, as against adult election—

that is, as unconditional election is not a doctrine sustained either by reason or by Scripture, and therefore cannot be made the ground of any right whatever, either in the case of the infant or the adult, we shall not stop longer to consider this opinion.

Secondly. That the right of infants to baptism "depends upon the prevision by God of future faith and repentance in the child, at a subsequent period of life." Ibid. 36. This is in principle the preceding opinion; and we only add, that the foreknowledge of God is made in no case the ground of right to the spiritual blessings and privileges of the covenant of grace.

Thirdly. That the right of infants to baptism depends upon "a *seed*, or *principle*, or *habit* of faith, implanted in the heart," or "a spiritual bias of the mind, which may be called a seed or principle of faith." Ibid. 37, 38. This opinion also is founded upon the theory of election and final perseverance, and so may be also despatched without further consideration.

Fourthly. That the right of infants to baptism is founded upon the fact that one of the parents really, or at least nominally, is believing. "Our service on infant baptism is drawn up on the hypothesis that the infant is the child of at least one (really, or at any rate nominally) believing parent." Ibid. 32. The right of infants to baptism is not founded upon *social* relations, but upon the vicarious death of Christ, and as all children sustain the same relation to the death of Christ, all therefore are invested with equal right to baptism: to admit it in one case, is to admit it in all: to deny it in one case, is to deny it in all: to deny it in one case is to destroy altogether their only hope of salvation. Thus, all children indiscriminately are entitled to baptism, *in their own right*, founded upon the vicarious death of Christ—independently of any relation to their parents—a right which

baptism recognises as already existing. The gracious rights of children are not founded upon mere conjectures or hypotheses of any kind, but upon the essential, substantial, and immutable facts and principles of the Godhead "manifest in the flesh."

Fifthly. Nor does the right of infants to baptism depend upon "vicarious pledges" made by parents at the time of baptism. "It must ever be recollected that baptism is a rite in which a covenant-engagement is entered into between God and man; in which, therefore, the engagement on God's part is to be met by a corresponding engagement on the part of man; and where the baptized person is too young to make this promise in his own person, it is to be made by others for him; and baptism is administered on this *vicarious pledge*," &c. Ibid. 415. The vicarious atonement, in every case, and not a vicarious faith, is the only ground of infant baptism.

Sixthly. Nor does the right of infants to baptism depend upon *responsibility*, any more than their right to salvation does; for, in the nature of things in their case, responsibility cannot be made the ground of baptism any more than it can be made the ground of salvation.

Seventhly. Nor does their right to baptism depend upon *volition*, since, in the nature of things in their case, volition can no more be made the ground of baptism than it can be made the ground of salvation.

Eighthly. Nor does their right to baptism depend upon *consciousness*, since, in the nature of things in their case, consciousness can no more be made the ground of baptism, than it can be made the ground of salvation.

Ninthly. Nor does their right to baptism depend upon *repentance and faith*, since, in the nature of things in their case, repentance and faith can no more be made the ground of baptism than they can be made the ground of salvation.

There is one more view, which we believe is the only view founded upon evangelical truth, and which we proceed to state and defend.

The right of infants—all infants indiscriminately—is founded upon the vicarious death of Christ.

As all infants, in consequence of their association with Christ as their federal representative, have an unconditional right to all the blessings of his atonement, nothing is more just and rational than that this right should be formally acknowledged as soon as the plan of redemption began to be formally developed. As the plan of salvation referred as much to them as to the rest of the human race, some mention of them must be made in the arrangement of the system of salvation—and the church is composed of all who are conditionally or unconditionally the subjects of salvation. Hence, in view of the ground of salvation, and the character of those entitled to association with the church, we may expect to find the defence of the rights, and the declaration of the interests of infants, in the very first dispensation of mercy that shall be proposed, and consequently a continuation of the same rights and interests associated with all succeeding dispensations of salvation to the end of time. I go back to the first regularly constituted church in the world, and its constitution embraces children. The covenant made with this church is the *everlasting covenant of grace,* founded upon the atonement of Christ, and is thus expressed by God himself: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an *everlasting covenant;* to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."[3] This was the form of the everlasting covenant made with Abraham, embraced again in the Jewish covenant, founded in both these instances upon the atone-

[3] Gen. xvii. 7.

ment of Christ, and is essentially the same with the Christian covenant. Hence, as God's covenant with the church changes not, Peter, on the day of Pentecost, opened the Christian dispensation with express reference to this covenant in its spiritual bearing on the case of the Jews. "Repent, and be baptized," says he, "in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. *For the promise is unto you and your children.*"[4] What promise, but the one we have just quoted from the mouth of God, unalterable in its character throughout all generations? This view is supported by the Apostle Paul. "And he (Abraham) received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had yet being circumcised: *that he might be the father of all them that believe,* though they be not circumcised, *that righteousness might be imputed unto them.*"[5] That is, Abraham, through faith, received all the blessings of the everlasting covenant made with him, of which circumcision was the sign and seal, and his children, being embraced in the same covenant, received the same sign and seal. So Christian believers receive the same blessings of the same covenant, through the same faith, of which, under the Christian dispensation, baptism is the sign, and therefore their children, embraced in the same covenant, are entitled to the same sign. Were you and your children under the Abrahamic, or Jewish dispensation, would not your children receive the initiatory seal by which they would be entitled to all the external and spiritual blessings of the Jewish Church? Now as every dispensation of the everlasting covenant is founded upon the atonement of Christ, though the dispensation, with its accompanying and corresponding external sign or seal, be changed, the everlasting covenant still remains in

[4] Acts ii. 38, 39.

[5] Rom. iv. 11.

full force. Therefore, the same right to salvation belongs to children under all dispensations—only the outward form of recognising this right may be changed according to the character of the dispensation; and as the external sign or seal must be either circumcision or baptism; and as circumcision is abolished, because the dispensation to which it was adapted is consummated; and as baptism remains the only proper sign of initiation into the church under the Christian dispensation, therefore the rights of infants to the blessings of the everlasting covenant cannot be formally and properly recognised under the Christian dispensation in any other way than by *baptism:* the covenant remains the same; the rights of children remain the same; only the rights of children under different dispensations are recognised by a different sign or seal. Under the Christian dispensation, therefore, *children are entitled to baptism*—and so shall be to the end of the world.

So long as the same reason or ground of right continues, the same right remains in full force as at first. Thus, the right of children to church membership remains still in force, since the ground of this right remains the same, namely, the atonement of Christ. Therefore, God himself cannot alter this right, or revoke his own institution, without changing the ground which he himself has laid down as the foundation of his church. God himself cannot deny children a right to church membership, *without changing essentially the whole plan of redemption.* The right of infants to church membership remains the same in all ages of the world, since the reason or ground on which God originally connected them with the church remains the same in all ages. Firmly and eternally is the right of infants to church membership established. This right God has confirmed "by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie." The ground of infant circumcision was sacrificial, and hence

Christ declares, "I came not to destroy, but to fulfil;" and hence, in confirming infant circumcision, he confirmed infant baptism. An attempt to change the standing and immutable law of God transcends the bold enterprise of the fabled giants against heaven, which was only a feint to alarm the gods, but this is a blow struck at the throne of Jehovah, to divest him of supreme legislative power and authority, and assumes more than God himself can command without making a fundamental change in his gracious government. Let the Baptists consider that they undertake to do what God himself has not done, and cannot do without changing the foundation of human redemption. Let them consider, that by changing the reason or ground of the right of infants to church membership, they remove the atonement, which God himself, in infinite mercy and wisdom, laid down for their salvation, and that thus they leave no ground remaining on which children can be saved. They must change the reason, before they can change the right: they cannot destroy the reason without destroying all the spiritual hopes of children: and therefore, in denying children the right to church membership, they are in principle removing the only ground on which they can be saved. It is not in the power of man, however, to withhold from infants admission into heaven, though they are frequently denied it into the church on earth. In other words: the simple fact that a right was acknowledged in the early ages of the church, is not a sufficient reason that it should be acknowledged through every succeeding age of the church, unless the ground on which it was founded be clearly proved to have been constituted by God as of *perpetual* force. The ground on which children were received into the church under the dispensations that preceded the Christian dispensation, was the atonement of Christ, *to be made in due time.* Therefore, since the atonement *has been made,* children should be

received into the church under the Christian dispensation by baptism. Had no atonement been provided, neither infants nor adults could have been received into the church, for then no church could have been founded; but since the atonement has been made, all children, in all time, have an equal, unconditional, and indisputable title to church membership, which, under the Christian dispensation, is set forth and formally sealed by baptism. Observe, the covenant of salvation made with man was to remain in full force in all ages of time. The Jews were the *first* to have their children formally recognised as the proper subjects both of salvation and the "seal of righteousness" in Christ. Is the covenant of Christ, with the reason of an external ratifying seal, set aside in its application to children under the Christian dispensation? Certainly not, since the covenant, and the reason of an external seal, remain the same in all ages. All therefore who entertain objections to infant baptism, express equal contempt for circumcision, and oppose God himself, and the reason on which he transacts the affairs of his gracious government, under all the dispensations of his grace. Let the Baptists settle this grave question with Supreme Wisdom; for the reason of things, in the case of infant circumcision and infant baptism, is the common ground on which both are founded. Baptism, as in the case of circumcision, was added as a seal *after* the covenant of grace was made with man, not to give efficacy to the covenant, or to strengthen its validity, but as *confirmatory* of it. Thus, children are not baptized *in order that* they may be brought into covenant with God, for they are already recognised by God as his children, and embraced in his covenant, by virtue of the atonement, and the promise of Christ, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." And hence they are solemnly and formally recognised by baptism as embraced in the covenant. As in the case of the adult believer, who

has not been baptized in infancy, baptism is added *after* his faith, not to give any additional efficacy and validity to the covenant of grace, but as *confirmatory;* so in the case of infants, who have been constituted unconditional partakers of the blessings of the divine covenant, baptism is added as the formal confirmation of their title. It is vain to dwell upon the element of water, and the mere external observance, without special and exclusive regard be devoutly and reverently had to the gracious design of baptism, since it is the importance of the thing signified that gives value to the sign and the seal. And as the covenant of grace is immutable, the design of baptism, in the case of infants, as a sign, is to show that they have been unconditionally made partakers of the thing thereby signified. Dying in infancy, they receive *the thing signified*, without hearing the word, without being taught, and without faith. Why then exclude them from the *sign?* If there was good reason in the Divine mind why the covenant of grace, under the Jewish dispensation, should be confirmed by an external seal in the case of children, the same reason continues in force under the Christian dispensation; and hence, it as effectually secures to children the right to baptism, under the Christian dispensation, as it secured to children the right to circumcision, under the Jewish dispensation; and consequently, children have as good a right to baptism under the Christian dispensation, as children had to circumcision under the Jewish dispensation. The difference in the mode of acknowledging the right specified cannot affect either the covenant or the reason.

Infants, dying in infancy, are saved by *free grace,* and therefore they may be baptized by *free grace.* Free grace gives to them the title in both instances—invests them with equal title to the *sign* and the *substance.* Infants, though in a *passive* state, may be capable of inheriting an estate;

much more are they entitled by free grace, dying in infancy, to heirship with Christ. They are unconditionally *infant heirs of glory*, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" —and that too, blessed be God! without faith, and without fellow-suffering with Christ. As, under the Jewish dispensation, circumcision was the outward seal of "the righteousness of faith," and was applied to children before they were capable of exercising faith; so, under the Christian dispensation, as baptism is the outward seal of "the righteousness of faith," baptism may be administered to children before they are capable of exercising faith, since they have righteousness without faith. To say that circumcision was not applied to any as a "seal of righteousness," but to those who were capable of exercising faith, is to deny the truth of the sacred record, for it was applied to children as the seal of the "everlasting covenant." In like manner, baptism may be applied to children under the Christian dispensation, since in their case the atonement of Christ, and not faith, is indispensable to "righteousness." And, therefore, all deductions unfavorable to infant baptism, drawn from premises embracing repentance and faith, are wholly irrelevant to the case of infant baptism. The premises from which are deduced the propriety and validity of infant baptism are contained in *the death* of Christ, which redeems all infants from original guilt, and therefore their right to baptism is at once established. Likewise, all objections to infant baptism, founded upon the *unconsciousness* of infants, are illogical, since, as above, their right to baptism is founded upon *the death* of Christ, independently of their unconsciousness. The promises of the gospel supply the obligations to repentance and faith. The ground of salvation is the ground on which infants can sustain covenant relations. Consciousness, on the part of infants, is superseded by the anterior ground mercifully provided in the death of Christ. The infant dying

in infancy, sustains the same relations to the covenant of grace unconditionally, which the believer sustains conditionally. Thus, the infant, upon the ground of *previous* relation to Christ, should be formally recognised as an heir of glory, and a member of Christ's church on earth, by applying the seal of the covenant of grace, confirming and sealing unto him all the blessings of the everlasting covenant and advantages of connection with the Christian church, as he may be able to receive them, and imposing upon him the duty to discharge all the obligations of his consecration as they may rise in his subsequent life.

The mixed nature of baptism is founded upon the same ground. Baptism is partly positive and partly moral. Now infants unconditionally possess the primary qualification which the design of baptism requires; this moral qualification is obtained for them by the atonement of Christ, without faith, and for adults by faith: and hence baptism can be no more withheld from infants than from adult believers. In other words, the only barrier to baptism is *moral unfitness;* but in the case of infants this barrier is removed by the atonement of Christ, and therefore they are entitled to baptism.

One more remark. The moral qualification of infants to receive baptism is not *hereditary*, but by *grace.* It is upon *this* ground, and not that of natural relation to the parent, that all infants, without exception, whether of unbelieving or believing parents, have the same right to baptism. More than this: the ties of grace in *Christ,* and not the ties of regenerating grace in the *parent,* furnish the ground of infant baptism. The children of believers are not entitled to baptism "for their fathers' sake"—for upon this ground, it must be admitted, none but the children of believers would be entitled to baptism—but they are entitled to baptism upon the ground of Christ's atonement, and hence no discrimination

is to be made upon the ground of parental relation. All infants indiscriminately, through the rich, free, and enlarged promises of the gospel, are invested with the same unconditional title to baptism. No age or class is specified, that none may be excluded: all are included.

Here we might confidently rest the validity and obligation of infant baptism, but we proceed to other arguments, all of which are founded upon the great principles of the atonement of Christ, and drawn from the Scriptures.

CHAPTER II.

IN ALL THE COVENANTS GOD MADE WITH MAN, INFANTS HAVE BEEN INCLUDED.

In the *Adamic* covenant, in Paradise, "in the beginning" of the world, the holy posterity of our first parents would have been entitled to all the blessings of the covenant of *works*, had Eden continued in its original perfection to the present time. Under the *Abrahamic* covenant, which was the formal development of the covenant of *grace*, substituted in the place of the Adamic covenant, children were included, as we have seen in the preceding chapter. So under the *Mosaic* covenant: "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, YOUR LITTLE ONES, your wives, and thy stranger, that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood, unto the drawer of thy water: that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day."[1] And shall infants be excluded from

[1] Deut. xxix. 10–12.

a formal recognition of their rights under the gospel dispensation of the great covenant of grace ?—a dispensation which surpasses all others in the extent of its privileges, the range of its blessings, and the glory of its promises. Does the Christian dispensation contain nothing of a formal, public character for infants? Is this consistent with the character of the "fulness of times?" Strange, that while God formally embraced infants in every covenant previously made with man, he should exclude them under the Christian dispensation, which is the consummation and confirmation of all other dispensations under which children were received into the church! Strange, that while the ground on which every other evangelical dispensation was founded, and on which infants were formally recognised as the subjects of salvation, is the foundation of the Christian dispensation also, infants should be excluded from the Christian church! If it was only by the atonement of Christ, "finished" on the cross, that the seal of circumcision, and the hopes of infants, under all previous dispensations, were confirmed and established for ever, surely under the Christian dispensation, above every other dispensation, infants should be formally taken into covenant with God. If a formal recognition of the spiritual rights of infants—if a solemn consecration of infants to God —be non-essential under the Christian dispensation, why did not Supreme Wisdom dispense with such recognition and consecration under all previous dispensations? There is no more reason for omission in one case than in another: indeed, the same reason for their recognition and consecration is elemental in every dispensation; and, therefore, the obligation of the church thus to recognise and consecrate them to God, is elemental in the Christian dispensation. Such is the strong foundation of infant baptism under the Christian dispensation.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH THE CONTINUATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT CHURCH.

We shall consider the branch of the argument, at the head of this chapter, under the following divisions:—

1. The church, in all ages, is under the same great covenant of grace, though it may be under different dispensations.
2. Hence the seal of every dispensation is a seal of the general covenant of grace.
3. Therefore, baptism, the seal of the covenant under the Christian dispensation, is substituted for circumcision, the seal of the covenant under the Jewish dispensation.
4. Hence, infants ought to be baptized. These propositions shall follow in order.

1. The church, in all ages, is under the same covenant of grace, though it may be under different dispensations.

(1.) The church of God dates its origin, properly and formally, at the call of Abraham, though before this time there was what might be called the *patriarchal* dispensation, during which "men began to call upon the name of the Lord."

That the covenant under the Christian dispensation and the Abrahamic covenant is the same, is evident from the following scriptures: "And the scripture *foreseeing* that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached *before* the gospel unto Abraham, saying, IN THEE SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED. So then they

which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."[1] That is, God foreseeing that the Gentiles would need salvation by grace, and intending to justify the heathen by faith, makes the covenant of grace with Abraham in a formal manner, in fulfilment of the promise made to Adam in Eden, and to be confirmed by Christ upon the cross. This comprehensive view of the covenant of grace is gradually unfolded in succeeding ages. The "everlasting covenant," established with Abraham, is first mentioned in Genesis, 12th chapter, and confirmed by an external sign in the 17th chapter. This covenant is the fulfilment of the promise made with Adam, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," and is to continue through all ages of time. But the covenant made with Moses four hundred and thirty years later, was *added* to the old Abrahamic covenant, on account of the transgressions of the people, to show the nature of sin, to restrain from idolatry, and prepare the way for the reception of the Redeemer. Moses's law was "*added* because of transgressions, *till* the seed should come to whom the promise was made."[2] But Christ being come, the law of Moses that was added, passes away, and the covenant of grace still continues. "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed *before* of God, in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the *promise* of none effect."[3] Now, from the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, to the time when God formally made the covenant of grace with Abraham, as it is stated in the 12th chapter of Genesis, is precisely four hundred and thirty years—the very time Paul specifies; and as the adding of the Mosaic law did not annul the Abrahamic covenant, the abolition and removal of the Mosaic ceremonial law by the death of Christ was indispensable to the

[1] Gal. iii. 8. [2] Gal. iii. 19. [3] Gal. iii. 17.

establishment of the covenant of grace made with Abraham. Therefore, the Christian church, which is founded upon the death of Christ, is not only the *continuation*, but the *completion* of the Old Testament church. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness, and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also. Therefore, it is of faith, that it might be of grace: to the end the promises may be sure to all the seed, and not to that only which is of the *law*, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. As it is *written*, I have made thee a father of many nations."[4] Thus, as the general covenant included infants under the Abrahamic dispensation, and still contines, it includes infants under the Christian dispensation.

Again, the apostle observes "that the Gentiles should be *fellow-heirs* and of the *same body*, and *partakers* of his promises in Christ by the gospel."[5] And again: "He is our peace, who hath *broken down the middle wall of partition between us*, that he might make in himself of *twain*, *one new man*, and reconcile BOTH unto God IN ONE BODY by the cross."[6] And again: "Therefore, ye are no more *strangers* and *foreigners*, but *fellow-citizens* with the *saints*, and of the *household* of God; and are built upon the foundation of the *apostles* and *prophets*, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF CORNER-STONE."[7] Here the apostle declares that "the household," "the body," "the building," "the commonwealth," are not completed till the Christian church is constituted, and the foundation and corner-stone of the whole building laid down by Christ and his apostles. The

[4] Rom. iv. [5] Eph. iii. 6. [6] Eph. ii. 14, 16. [7] Ibid. ii. 19, 20.

old scaffolding is now taken down, and the church stands forth in its original design, finished, perfect, immutable, majestic.

Therefore, when the believing Jews, in the days of Christ, entered into the Christian church, they changed not their church relations. They merely passed from the "rudiments," as taught by the ceremonial law, to the possession of the doctrines of the gospel, as taught by Christ and his apostles. They embraced Christ, who by consummating and abolishing the ceremonial law, became the foundation of the Christian church. Therefore, AS THEY NEVER LEFT THEIR CHURCH, their children cannot be excluded from the Christian church. The ceremonial law was the "partition wall" between the Jewish and Christian dispensations, and consequently, the breaking down of this dividing wall secured the *enlargement* of the Jewish church, and its *oneness* with the Christian church. And as the whole is greater than a part, not only the Jews, but Gentiles, with their children, are entitled to the immunities and blessings of the everlasting covenant. By a masterly stroke of Divine power and wisdom, Christ in his death perpetuates the title of Jewish children to church membership, and introduces the children of Gentile parents also into the general church of God under the Christian dispensation.

On this ground no change is made in the relations of the believing Jews. They continue as the true church, and still are called "the household," "the citizens," "the commonwealth" of God. They that believe *continue* "the branches," "the building," "the city," "the members," "the household" of faith. The change is made in the condition of the *Gentiles*. These, as "far off," as "aliens" and "strangers," are "brought nigh," and made "fellow-citizens with the saints." The change in the condition of the Gentiles is absolute, universal, and essential. It was for this very pur-

pose that the Jews were originally called and constituted as the church of God, that the Gentiles also might be gathered into the same great church, and "be builded together for a habitation of God by the Spirit," and consequently, that their children might be entitled to the same church relations. To continue the argument:—"Thou (the Christian church) *bearest not the root*, BUT THE ROOT THEE."[8] If the Jewish and Christian churches are not integral parts of the same great church, then there is no force in the figure used in the text: the meaning is, the Jewish and Christian churches are as much integral parts of the same great church as the root and trunk are integral parts of the same tree. Again: "For if thou (the Gentile church) wert cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these (Jews) which be the *natural* branches, be graffed into THEIR OWN OLIVE TREE."[9] Our Baptist brethren themselves admit that the Old Testament church is here represented, and that the church of God, THE TREE, planted in the days of Abraham, though mutilated by a thousand storms, *still lives*, and the "natural branches" are yet to be graffed into its trunk *again*, and constitute its crowning glories. But children were the young natural branches of this tree under the Jewish dispensation; and when it was first planted, they were graffed into it with their parents, according to the positive command of God. Now until this command be positively and expressly repealed, they are entitled, in all ages of the Christian church, to be graffed by *baptism* into the same tree. Indeed, so far from being invested with the right to deny them this privilege, it is our solemn duty to *continue* it unto them. The covenant is not changed, the outward seal only is changed, and the change of the seal effects no

[8] Rom. xi. 18. [9] Ibid. xi.

modification in the covenant. Hence, it is as just, as wise, as reasonable, as proper, as desirable, that children be now associated with the church by baptism, as it was that they should be associated with the church formerly by circumcision. The perpetuity of the covenant secures the identity of the church under every dispensation, and consequently, it secures also the continuation of the religious privileges of children through all time. You ask for positive warrant in the New Testament for the church membership of children—and I direct your attention to the identity of the church, under *all dispensations*, and under *both Testaments*, and to the positive enactment made by Jehovah *two thousand* years before the New Testament was written, by which children were explicitly and formally associated with the church, and which, never having been explicitly and positively revoked, remains as effectually in force, under the New Testament dispensation, as it was under the Old, when the church of God was first organized. Without repeal, there can be no exclusion—and there can be no repeal under the dispensations of *free grace*, until the ground of infant salvation, the atonement of Christ, be changed; and consequently, as "the word of the Lord standeth for ever," the religious privileges of infants must continue for ever. With this immutable and eternal foundation of infant baptism before us, and the consequent continuation of religious privileges to children from the beginning to the end of the world, the Baptists, so far from having any right to call upon us for positive and explicit enactment in the New Testament respecting the right of infants to baptism, are themselves called upon to produce a positive repeal of their original right to church membership. The *silence* of the New Testament, if it were wholly silent on the subject, would be a positive confirmation of the rights of children as they were specified in the covenant of grace at the beginning.

The Apostle Paul, in the tenth chapter to the Romans, after having removed, in the preceding chapters, every objection brought by the Jews against the gospel in preference to their law, now sets aside the further evasion that they had not had preachers of the doctrine of salvation by faith, by showing that the gospel *had been preached* to them under the Old Testament dispensation. He introduces the Jew as inquiring, "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" But Paul replies, "Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. But to Israel he saith, all day long I have stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." Here the apostle shows that the gospel is not only the doctrine of every dispensation, but the common property of the world, and that the Jews had a special interest in it. The fact that the Jews disbelieved that the prophecies were accomplished in Christ, and their consequent rejection of him, are no proofs that the gospel was not preached unto them under the Old Testament dispensation.

Compare Amos ix. 11, 12, with Acts xv. 14–17. "In that day I will *raise up* the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof: and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this." The inspired interpretation of this prophecy of Amos is, "Simon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle

of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, who doeth all these things." Acts xv. 14–17.

In the Epistle to the Romans, lest they should think he proclaimed a new doctrine, the apostle declared that Christianity was but the fulfilment of prophecy, "which God had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures." Rom. i. 2. Before Festus, Paul also pleads the antiquity of the gospel, and identifies it with "the things" foretold by Moses and the prophets: "I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." Acts xxvi. 22. Many other scriptures might be quoted in proof of the identity of the church under every dispensation of the covenant; such as "Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day: he saw it, and was glad;"[10] "the kingdom of God shall be taken from you (the Jews) and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof;"[11] "he will come and destroy the husbandman, and give the vineyard unto others:"[12] but we suppose it unnecessary to multiply quotations any further to prove a point so clearly exhibited in every part of the sacred records, and to which we shall soon return in the course of this argument.

(2.) The church is the same in all ages, since in its organization it possesses the same Divine Head; the same moral law; the same gospel; the same precious promises; the same spiritual design; the same atoning blood; the same Mediator; the same sanctifying Spirit; and the same doctrines—repentance, faith, justification, regeneration, sanctification, the witness of the Spirit, the resurrection, the general judgment, and the sanctions of rewards and punish-

[10] John viii. 56. [11] Matt. xxi. 43. [12] Mark xii. 9.

ments. "Think not," says Christ, "that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil"—*πληρωσαι—plerosai*—to complete, to *make perfect.* The church of Christ began with the first soul saved in the fallen world, and was designed to embrace all men, and extend through all time. It is founded upon the redemptive principle, and the redemptive principle is applicable to every case. The process in the development of this great principle, Christ perfected or consummated by his death, and hence the church, founded upon this principle, is the same in all ages of time and periods of eternity. The Jews themselves, under the Levitical and prophetical dispensation, were saved upon the redemptive principle, and their faith in Christ to come was established by his death, and after his death he commissioned his apostles to proclaim the applicability of this principle to "all nations." And so they did. "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also;" for he is "no respecter of persons." And the time will come when the Jews shall be converted and restored—what then shall become of *their* children? Jeremiah answers this question: "Their children also shall be as *aforetime.*" Jer. xxx. 20. That is, shall be formally recognised by baptism as embraced in the everlasting covenant under the Christian dispensation, as they were formally recognised by circumcision as embraced in the covenant under the Jewish dispensation. Indeed, as Christ, the great Antetype, fulfilled in himself all the preceding types, he must still preserve in himself substantially the gracious import of all the types, and so perpetuate the spiritual nature of the Old Testament church. Many things, it is true, under the old dispensation, were instituted for a limited period, and many were dimly revealed, but the elements of identity we have mentioned are essential to the plan of salvation, and immutable, and

hence secure to children the right to church membership to the end of time. True also, the privileges of the church under the Christian dispensation, are greatly enlarged, but the accession does not destroy the identity of the church, any more than an accession of rights and immunities destroys the identity of a city, corporation, or nation. While the death of Christ consummated, and therefore set aside, many divine appointments and ceremonial services of the Jewish church as of no more use, it at the same time laid the foundation for the enlargement of the privileges, without affecting the identity of the church.

Thus, the original constitution of the church embraced children as church members, and as that constitution remains in all its essential parts the same in all time; and as certain ceremonial laws, in no respect interfering with the spiritual rights of children, have been annulled, therefore children under the same general covenant are entitled to church membership under the Christian dispensation. We pass now to the second consideration in the general argument.

2. Hence, the seal of every dispensation of the covenant is a seal of the general covenant of grace.

(1.) Such was the character of circumcision as a seal. The covenant made with Abraham and his posterity, the Jewish people, is partly spiritual, and partly temporal. It is not specified, that circumcision was the seal of *that part* of the covenant only which referred to *temporal* blessings, but of the *whole* covenant; and consequently it referred also to the spiritual blessings embraced in the covenant. This twofold covenant has but one seal, viz. circumcision: circumcision, therefore, was the seal of the covenant of grace, under the Jewish dispensation, and consequently identified the Jewish with the general Church of God. It is objected, that "circumcision was the external seal of the national covenant, but not of the spiritual, and hence cannot be a

seal of the covenant of grace." Then, in the first place, the spiritual covenant with Abraham was without an external seal, which is contrary to the positive institution of God. Secondly. God made no difference between the children of Abraham, and the children of Ishmael. "And Abraham took Ishmael, his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with money, every male, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin, in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him"—and yet not one of these ever possessed any portion of Canaan, according to the provisions of the temporal covenant; and consequently, unless circumcision had respect to *spiritual* blessings, it secured no privileges at all to these persons. And subsequently, the children of Esau received the seal of circumcision, by which they possessed a title to the spiritual blessings of the covenant, though they were excluded from a participation in the temporal blessings of the covenant: they never possessed the promised land. Now if the children of Ishmael and Esau, who were the posterity of Abraham, were excluded from the temporal blessings of the covenant, and yet were circumcised, certainly circumcision was more than a national seal.

As they never obtained the temporal blessings, nor enjoyed the national privileges, to which circumcision entitled the descendants of Jacob, therefore, circumcision in their case, was a seal of the spiritual covenant of God with Abraham. In the case of the sons of Jacob, it was both national and spiritual; and as a national seal, therefore, Moses *repeated* it just before the Israelites entered the land of promise, to which their title was now confirmed.

Thirdly. The sons of the stranger also received the seal of the covenant. The Gentiles could not derive any spiritual privileges till they had received the sign of the covenant. "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord to serve him, every one that *taketh hold of my cove-*

nant, will I bring to my holy mountain," &c.[13] Reference evidently is here made to the obligations connected with the ancient initiatory sacrament of the Jewish church, the external seal of the covenant of grace; for it is matter of explicit enactment, that the Jews, and not the Gentiles, should derive temporal advantages, as well as spiritual, under the covenant made with Abraham.

Fourthly. Circumcision was the seal of the covenant in which "all the families of the earth were to be blessed." It is inconceivable how this promise can be understood in a temporal sense. It must have extended further than to the inhabitants and temporal blessings of Canaan. It is impossible for the whole world to dwell in Canaan, as also impossible for Canaan to distribute temporal blessings throughout the world. Indeed the Jews became the agents of terrible and destructive calamities to surrounding nations. And hence this promise is to be understood in a spiritual sense; and consequently circumcision, the seal of the Jewish dispensation, was a seal of the general covenant of grace.

Fifthly. "What profit is there of circumcision? Much *every way;* CHIEFLY that because unto them were committed *the oracles of God.*"[14] That is, circumcision entitled both Jew and Gentile to all the advantages connected with the possession of the sacred oracles—the revelation of the Divine will made to Moses and the prophets respecting the covenant of grace and the Messiah;—and surely these inestimable spiritual advantages cannot be confounded with the earthly Canaan.

Sixthly. That circumcision had special reference to the obedience of the law, the Apostle Paul expressly declares: "Circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law; but if

[13] Isa. lvi. 6, 7.

[14] Rom. iii. 1, 2.

thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." [15]

Seventhly. The apostle evidently refers to the spiritual design of circumcision, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, in which he concludes, that they were "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, having no hope, and without God in the world," "*at the time*, when they were of the "circumcision," and "Gentiles in the flesh." But now "being made nigh by the blood of Christ," and circumcision, the original seal of the righteousness of faith, being superseded by baptism, it is evident that circumcision under the Jewish dispensation has the same spiritual reference that baptism has under the Christian dispensation.

Eighthly. The apostle confirms this view: "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God." That is, circumcision as an outward mark, not only had a national meaning, but a spiritual sense, and as such was a seal of the covenant of grace under the Jewish dispensation.

Ninthly. While the covenant of grace made with Abraham principally referred to spiritual blessings, and was so understood by the Fathers, it also embraced supplemental promises referring to the possession of the land of Canaan. In view of the scope of the covenant of grace, and the range of temporal blessings secured to the Jews under that covenant in addition to spiritual blessings, circumcision was constituted the ratifying seal of the covenant of grace, and the promise of the earthly Canaan conjointly, but principally referred to spiritual advantages.

[15] Rom. ii. 25.

Tenthly. The infant Jesus at eight days old, was solemnly recognised as a member of the Jewish Church—and yet he never possessed a foot of the promised land—he had not where to lay his head. His kingdom was not of this world.

Eleventh. Circumcision signified a belief in the promises of the covenant of grace, and hence had reference to spiritual blessings. These promises referred to Christ, "the seed of Abraham," as yet to come, and hence the well-known and continued expectation of the Jews of their promised Messiah.[16]

Twelfth. That circumcision was the seal of the general covenant of grace, is proved from the following circumstances. 1. Circumcision was a seal binding on the part of the Jews, to believe in Christ to come, and on the part of God, to fulfil his promises respecting the Messiah, in his own time, by revealing him to the world. Hence, upon the advent of Christ, the covenant was confirmed and fulfilled, and circumcision, as a seal, was no longer necessary. 2. If after the coming and manifestation of Christ, circumcision had been continued, it would have implied a rejection of the covenant made with Adam, Abraham, and all mankind in Christ Jesus: "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of none effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."[17] That is, the covenant of grace being fulfilled on the coming of Christ, it was to continue in full force through all time, and as circumcision distinguished the Jews as the peculiar people of God, as well as sealed their title to the land of Canaan, on the manifestation of Christ, the con-

[16] And so the baptism of John imposed the obligation "to believe in him who should come," and thus the dispensations of Moses and John, in this respect, were the same, though the outward seals were different.

[17] Gal. v. 2–4.

firmed covenant of salvation was to be "made known to all nations, for the obedience of faith," according to the promise made to Abraham—the peculiar rights of the Jews being now merged in the common participation of the universal provisions of salvation—which at once connects the Jews with the great covenant of mercy in Christ Jesus. Thus, circumcision was not only a national seal, but typical and spiritual in its chief importance; and hence under the Jewish dispensation, it was the seal of the covenant of grace.

(2.) Such is the character of baptism.

It remains now to show, that the church after the coming of Christ, to the end of the world, is under the same great covenant of grace, and that baptism is the external seal of it. Our work here is easy and brief. That the Christian dispensation is a dispensation of the grace of God, and that baptism is its outward seal, none will deny. Christ, in a few words, settles the whole matter. Consider the gospel commission—the scope of it: "the whole world." The duration of it: "lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world." And the external seal of it: "*baptizing in the name*," &c. Hence, baptism as the outward seal of the Christian dispensation, is the external seal of the same covenant of grace of which circumcision was the external seal under the Jewish dispensation.

In reply to the conclusion that the covenant of grace made with Abraham, is the same in all ages of time, the Baptists assume, that the repetitions of this covenant in the 12th, 15th, and 17th chapters of Genesis, are not repetitions, but so many distinct covenants. We answer:

First. Whatever distinctions existed, or additions were made, in the repetitions of the covenant, they all included spiritual blessings, and so the original seal of circumcision was applicable to all.

Secondly. Such an assumption destroys the ground of

justification by faith. The *Sinai* covenant was entered into 430 years after the covenant which was made with Abraham. The Apostle Paul, in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, argues that the doctrine of the Bible, from the beginning, is justification by faith; and he selects, as a most promising and convincing example, the case of Abraham. He shows, that Abraham was justified, not on the footing of the law, but under the covenant made with him 430 years before the law was given. As the covenant is entirely distinct from the law, the argument is conclusive, that circumcision was the seal of the covenant; but upon the ground assumed by the Baptists, the law was *co-eval* with the covenant, though Paul affirms that the law was given 430 years *after* the covenant—and this covenant, he says, is the gospel covenant.

Thirdly. The covenant recorded in the 17th chapter of Genesis, it is alleged, was a covenant of temporal blessings only; and to *this* covenant, and not to *that* made with Abraham, in the 12th chapter, was the seal of circumcision annexed. Let us see. In the 12th chapter it is stated: "Now the Lord said to Abraham, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Now this covenant, which is supposed to be one of temporal blessings only, *is the very covenant which the Apostle Paul distinctly and frequently quotes in the New Testament, with a* SPIRITUAL *interpretation.* Compare Gen. xvii. 4, 5, with Rom. iv. 16, 17: "As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, *and thou shalt be a father of many nations.* Neither shall thy name be called any more Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham;

for a father of many nations have I made thee." Gen. xvii. 4, 5. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, *who is the father of us all,* (*as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,*") &c. Rom. iv. 16, 17. Jesus himself sustains this interpretation: "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not *read* that which was spoken to you by God, saying, I am the God of *Abraham,* and the God of *Isaac,* and the God of *Jacob?* God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Matt. xxii. 31, 32. And Paul confirms the position: "These all died in the faith; not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now, as they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. xi. 13–16. Here is reference made to a *spiritual* and *eternal* inheritance; and therefore, if the covenant made with Abraham in the 17th chapter did not embrace any thing more than a *temporal* inheritance, no promise of a *spiritual* and *eternal* inheritance was ever made *at all* to Abraham, and the faith and hope of the patriarchs were vain. The ancient land of Canaan was not the promised country to which they looked, for "by faith Abraham sojourned *in the land of promise,* as in a *strange* country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the *same promise:* for he looked for a *city which hath foundations,* whose builder and maker is God." Heb.

xi. 9, 10. And the apostle represents the patriarchs as having "*no inheritance in it*, (the land of Canaan,) *no not so much as to set their foot on:*" and yet, "through faith and patience they *inherited the promises.*" This is the covenant which the Baptists have degraded to a covenant of *temporal* promises! This is the covenant which Paul by inspiration declares to have been the covenant of grace, "*confirmed before of God in Christ,*" and to which the seal of circumcision was annexed. In a word, no *new* covenant of grace is made or referred to in the *New* Testament; the revelation of the great covenant of grace is made in the *Old* Testament, and the New Testament discloses the great facts of *fulfilment* and *confirmation;* and therefore, the church being under the same covenant in all ages, the seal of every dispensation of the covenant must be the seal of the general covenant.

3. Therefore, baptism, the seal of the general covenant under the Christian dispensation, is substituted for circumcision, the seal of the general covenant, under the Jewish dispensation.

(1.) As circumcision was the seal of the covenant of grace under the Jewish dispensation, and as baptism was appointed by Christ as the seal of the same covenant, under the Christian dispensation, therefore, in the change of dispensations, circumcision being abolished, and baptism enjoined, baptism must be substituted for circumcision. "When the covenant of grace, in its ancient form, was done away in Christ, then the old sign and seal peculiar to that form was by consequence abolished. If then baptism be not the initiatory sign and seal of the same covenant, in its new and perfect form, as circumcision was of the old, this new covenant has no such initiatory rite or sacrament at all; since the Lord's supper is not initiatory, but, like the sacri-

fices of old, is of regular and habitual observance."[18] A seal is a sensible sign, that indicates a formal and more solemn consent of both parties to a thing agreed upon between them, than could have been expressed in mere words —making the contract or promise more sure and binding, if possible, on both parties. Thus, if a seal have reference to a deed, it identifies and authenticates it as his who professes to be its author, and holds him to the full performance of all its requisitions; if it refer to a promise, it binds the author to its fulfilment; if it refer to commands, it carries along with it the authority of their author. The form of the seal may be changed by the authorized party, without in any respect changing the scope of the original deed, or the sacredness of the original promise, or the authority of the original commands, or the obligation and relation of the original parties. Thus, the form of the seal under the Christian dispensation, may be different from that under the Jewish dispensation, without in any respect materially affecting the relation or connection between the contracting parties. And thus it is that believers, who are baptized under the Christian dispensation, are called the children of Abraham, who is the primary example of faith to all believers, though they be not circumcised. The seal of the covenant authoritatively refers to the righteousness of faith, and guarantees, on the part of God, the fulfilment of all his promises to the believer. In the case of children, however, righteousness is without faith, and consequently the seal of baptism in their case is the pledge of faithfulness on the part of God, and of obedience, at the proper time, on their part, as will be evident from a moment's consideration of the import of infant baptism as a *seal*. First, it is a formal and solemn seal, that the guilt of original sin is unconditionally

[18] Watson's Insts., vol. ii. 620.

forgiven through the vicarious death of Christ, and that the infant is already in a state of justification. The pardon of the guilt of original sin, in the adult, is never formally set forth till he is baptized; nor is the pardon of actual guilt in the adult ever formally set forth till he is baptized. Secondly, as a consequence of this unconditional forgiveness, it signifies that the infant, dying in infancy, shall be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and so be saved. Thirdly, it is a seal, pledging *conditionally* to the infant, should he live, all the blessings of the covenant of grace, in time and eternity. The conditions of the covenant of grace are repentance, faith, and obedience, to be performed by the child should he ever arrive at responsible age. Should the child arrive at responsible age, and these conditions never be performed, *then the covenant from the first is a nullity.* No one will deny, that he who is in a state of justification has a right to baptism; and as every infant is in such a state, he has such a right, just as the adult in such a state has such a right. And just as in the case of the adult in a state of justification, should he fail to fulfil the conditions of the covenant, namely, faith and obedience "unto death," or during the period of probation, the covenant from the first becomes a nullity; so in the case of the child baptized in infancy, should he live and fail to perform the conditions of the covenant, the covenant to him from the first becomes a nullity. In the case of both infant and adult, baptism, as a seal, imposes conditions subsequently to be performed; in both cases, the covenant, of which baptism is the formal seal, may become a nullity; and hence there is no more reason why one should be denied baptism than the other. In a word, baptism, as a seal, in the case of infants, signifies that, should they live, and unto the end of life perform all the conditions implied, they shall enjoy all the blessings of the covenant of grace, to be bestowed at the proper time,

such as regeneration, sanctification, grace unto all good works, deliverance in temptation, comfort in affliction, support in trial, special providence, guardianship of angels, triumph in death, a glorious resurrection, acquittal at the judgment, glorification in heaven, and all the blessings of eternal life; and baptism, as a seal, in the case of the adult, in the nature of things, can signify nothing more nor less. Every infant is born under obligation, should he live to discharge all the conditions of the covenant of grace; and so in view of the prospective performance of these conditions, baptism is a seal by which he is recognised as prospectively entitled to all the blessings of the covenant. So far therefore from the adult having any right to deny baptism to infants, the adult himself, who has not been baptized, is under obligation to discharge all the conditions imposed in his own case, and receive the formal seal of baptism, which was omitted in his infancy—a neglect which he is now bound to adjust. Such, as a seal, is the import of baptism in infancy. "Although in children the seal goeth before, and righteousness of faith followeth after, as circumcision in Isaac, as Augustine showeth, and they as yet, when they are baptized, have no faith to make present use of the sacrament, yet, when they come to years of discretion, they are provoked and stirred up by the remembrance of the seal of faith given in baptism, which was indeed received but once; but the use and benefit thereof remaineth all the life long: so that this, notwithstanding the sacraments, are seals of faith, whether the seal goeth before or followeth after." Dr. Andrew Willet, 1600. And he adds: "Although Isaac with many others were first circumcised, and after justified, yet this is perpetual; they were no more justified by circumcision than Abraham, who was justified before he was circumcised, but by faith only."

(2.) That baptism takes the place of circumcision, is con-

clusively proved by the Apostle Paul: "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the *circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism.*" [19] Here baptism is recognised as the initiatory rite of the Christian dispensation, in the place of circumcision. The "circumcision of Christ," in contradistinction to the circumcision of the old dispensation, must be baptism, unless we explain the phrase as referring to Christ's personal circumcision, and then the meaning of the apostle will be, "that we put off the body of the sins of the flesh," by Christ's own personal circumcision, and not by his death, which is false in theology, and absurd in reason. And lest some should adopt this dogma, the apostle adds,—"*buried with him in baptism,*"—hereby identifying the "circumcision of Christ" with baptism.

Again: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ: and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." [20] "Baptized into Christ"—baptized into the name of Christ, means baptized into the acknowledgment of Christ, a profession of Christ, into a right of participation of the blessings of Christ's grace,—into fellowship with Christ. The argument is conclusive. By circumcision the Jews became heirs of Abraham, according to the promise. By baptism, sacramentally, Christians become the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise. The blessing is the same in both cases. Again: the Apostle Paul plainly and expressly declares, that baptism is substituted in the place of circumcision "Beware of concision"—or those who lay exorbitant stress on circumcision—"for we (who are bap-

[19] Col. ii. 10–12.

[20] Gal. iii. 27–29.

tized) are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit." Phil. iii. 2, 3. This is positive, absolute, and unequivocal.

(3.) At Jerusalem, when "certain men from Judea taught the Gentile brethren, except ye be circumcised, ye cannot be saved,"[21] the council that met to deliberate on this question, said nothing about baptism as a sufficient substitute, and therefore their silence is strong proof that baptism was already well understood as divinely instituted for such a purpose. The believing Jewish zealots at Jerusalem, urged against the Apostle Paul: "thou *teachest all the Jews* which are among the Gentiles, that they ought not to circumcise their *children*." What then? why, they ought to *baptize* their children.

(4.) The correspondence between baptism and circumcision as a sign and seal.

Firstly. As *a* SIGN. "Abraham received the sign of circumcision,—a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised." "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."[22] Here circumcision is expressly declared to be a sign of that inward circumcision of the heart by which the soul lives and enjoys the blessings of the covenant of grace. And so baptism, under the Christian dispensation, answers the same purpose. "Except a man be born of water, and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Here baptism shadows forth that inward spiritual washing which qualifies the soul for the enjoyment of the blessings of the covenant of grace.

Secondly. As *a* SEAL. "The Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people; circumcise, therefore, the fore-

[21] Acts xv. 1–5.

[22] Deut. xxx. 6.

skin of your heart."[23] So baptism, under the Christian dispensation: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ:" that is, by baptism ye have been outwardly sealed as Christians, and have professed Christ. Now as this two-fold correspondence between circumcision and baptism proves that they are signs and seals of the same covenant of grace under the Jewish and Christian dispensations, and as, on the abolition of the Jewish dispensation, baptism was divinely constituted the sign and seal of the covenant of grace under the Christian dispensation, therefore we conclude that baptism was substituted in the place of circumcision. In a word, baptism answers all the purposes of an initiatory ordinance, that circumcision answered under the Jewish dispensation. Circumcision was the initiatory sacrament of the church under the Abrahamic and Mosaic dispensations: baptism is the initiatory sacrament of the church under the Christian dispensation. Circumcision was the outward sign of the inward seal, to all the covenanted mercies of the atonement of Christ, under the ancient dispensations: baptism is precisely the same under the Christian dispensation. Circumcision was typical of the "circumcision of the heart in the spirit, and not in the letter:" baptism is symbolical of the cleansing and renewing of the heart by the same Spirit. Circumcision was the badge of God's people, under the old dispensations: baptism is the same under the new dispensation. If then circumcision—the initiatory ordinance of the Jewish church, the outward seal of the covenant, the symbol of spiritual circumcision, the badge of God's people—was applied to *children* under the Abrahamic and Mosaic dispensations, why, in the case of baptism, which answers all these ends, and which is the only conceivable substitute for circumcision to

[23] Deut. x. 15.

answer these ends, and which is the only proper initiatory sacrament of the Christian dispensation, restrict its application to the exclusion of children?—and that, too, without any just and rational ground whatever? Baptism, under the Christian dispensation, which is only another form of the everlasting covenant of grace, holds the same place, and answers all the spiritual ends that circumcision, under previous dispensations, held and accomplished. The fact that circumcision, under other dispensations, accomplished important spiritual ends, is positive proof that it was the initiatory rite of the great covenant of grace; and as baptism accomplishes the same spiritual ends under the Christian dispensation, the conclusion is inevitable, that the Christian church is but the *continuation*, as well as the *completion* of the great plan of salvation that had been in process of development from the fall of man till the death of Christ—and this, independently of all other considerations, is sufficient to establish the authority and validity of infant baptism. As a moral emblem, baptism means the same thing, under the Christian dispensation, that was included in circumcision, under the ancient dispensations; and therefore it may be rightly and properly applied to the same subjects. Whatever in whole and in part, in a spiritual sense, was expressed by circumcision, is expressed by baptism both in adult believers and in the case of children. Circumcision was mainly spiritual in its design—*and yet it was administered to children:* so with baptism. Circumcision had reference to the blessings which are conveyed through the Messiah—*and yet it was administered to children:* so with baptism Circumcision was a seal of visible membership in the church of God—*and yet it was administered to children:* so with baptism. Circumcision was an emblem of spiritual cleansing and purification—*and yet it was administered to children:* so with baptism. The unconscious-

ness of children was not considered as a barrier to their reception of circumcision: so with baptism. Inability to believe and discharge the obligations set forth in circumcision did not disqualify children from receiving circumcision: so with baptism. Indeed, there is no difference in the spiritual meaning of circumcision and baptism. If there be any difference between them, it is to be traced to the difference there is between the Jewish and Christian dispensations in their external form. Baptism is not the seal of a temporal covenant, nor is it restricted to a specified time, nor is it confined to one sex: "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, but all one in Christ Jesus," under the Christian dispensation.

Fifthly. The primitive fathers considered baptism received in the place of circumcision. Justin, A.D. 140, writes: "We Gentile Christians also, who by him have access to God, have not received that circumcision which is according to the flesh, but that circumcision which is spiritual—we have received this circumcision in baptism." Again: "To us Gentiles baptism is given instead of giving us circumcision." John Chrysostom, *Hom.* 40, in *Gen.* says, "There was pain and trouble in the practice of that Jewish circumcision; but our *circumcision*, I mean the grace of BAPTISM, gives cure without pain; and this for INFANTS as well as men." Fidus, A.D. 250, delayed to confer baptism on infants till the *eighth day*, which implies that he regarded baptism as substituted for circumcision. By reference to Wall's History of Infant Baptism,[24] the reader will find at length testimonies to this effect from Justin, Cyprian, Basile, Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom, and others which our limits forbid us here to recite.

Mr. Booth states the only plausible objection against the

[24] Vol i. chs. 6—15.

substitution of baptism for circumcision: "If baptism succeeded in the place of circumcision, how came it that both of them were in full force at the same time, that is, from the commencement of John's ministry to the death of Christ? For one thing to come in the room of another, and the latter to hold its place, is an odd kind of succession. Admitting the succession pretended, how came it that Paul circumcised Timothy after he had been baptized?" This objection is founded upon the supposed identity of John's, and the Christian dispensation; whereas John's dispensation was introductory and preparatory to the Christian dispensation, and hence, as John had no authority to abolish Jewish rites, circumcision was practised along with baptism during John's dispensation; circumcision could not be abolished before the Jewish dispensation was consummated by the death of Christ: but when the blood of the everlasting covenant was shed, circumcision was abolished, and baptism alone became the sign and seal of the perfected covenant of grace. As to the circumcision of Timothy, it was merely a *prudential* regulation. His mother was a Jewess, but his father was a Greek—and yet Timothy was laid under no obligation to keep the Mosaic law, for he had already sought and obtained *justification by faith in Christ.* But when no prudential consideration of this nature rendered circumcision necessary, the apostle refused to circumcise, as in the case of Titus, who was a Greek, and his parents Gentiles.[25]

But to be more particular. In the case of John's baptism, and that administered by Christ's disciples before his death, both were preparatory in their nature and design to becoming the sign and seal to the covenant of grace when it should be perfected and proposed to "all nations" for acceptance, which did not take place till the "blood of the

[25] Gal. ii. 3—5.

everlasting covenant" was shed. As this was the design of John's baptism, and as John was not invested with authority to abolish Jewish rites, or as the Jewish dispensation was not yet consummated, circumcision was yet in force, and continued to be in force, till Christ consummated the Jewish dispensation by his death, and formally instituted baptism as a sufficient sign and seal of the Christian dispensation. The mixed character of John's dispensation, that is, being both Jewish and preparatory, admitted the practice of both circumcision and baptism at the same time. Baptism was expressly added by the Father under John's dispensation; circumcision had not been abolished by the Saviour; and therefore the one, circumcision, as the sign and seal of the Jewish dispensation not yet abolished, and the other, baptism, as preparatory to the dispensation not yet introduced, were properly, and by divine authority, "both in full force at the same time." Of course, when the Jewish dispensation was consummated by the death of Christ, circumcision was dropped as no longer appropriate and in force, and baptism was retained as the appropriate, standing, and confirmatory sign and seal of the perfected covenant of grace. In other words, John's dispensation being preparatory, baptism is added by the Father as a significative preparatory rite; but the Jewish dispensation not being yet abolished, circumcision, its sign and seal, is still in force also; and both are administered at the same time: but both the Jewish and John's dispensation being consummated by the death of Christ, circumcision is abolished, and baptism is retained. Thus, baptism was not substituted in the place of circumcision under John's dispensation, when both were in force at the same time, but under the Christian dispensation, when circumcision was abolished. Besides, John's baptism was not Christian baptism, and for this reason, therefore, though circumcision was practised at the same time with

John's baptism, it cannot be said to have been in full force at the same time with Christian baptism. The Baptists, in the objection, fail to discriminate between John's and the Christian dispensation, and so omitting this important element, the Christian dispensation, in the premises, the conclusion is essentially sophistical. If the Baptists indeed could prove that circumcision and baptism were in force at the same time under the *Christian* dispensation, even then it would indubitably follow that infants have a right to church membership under the Christian dispensation; and so too much would be involved and proved for the purposes of the Baptists. In either case, the Baptists are equally unsuccessful: if baptism does take the place of circumcision, infants have as good a right to baptism under the Christian dispensation as they had to circumcision under the Jewish; or if circumcision was still in force under the Christian dispensation, infants had as good a right to it as they had under the Jewish: in either case, nothing is gained for the Baptists. To say, that circumcision was in force under the Christian dispensation, is to say, that infants had a right to church membership under the Christian dispensation; or to say, that baptism was substituted for circumcision under the Christian dispensation, is to say, that infants had a right to church membership under the Christian dispensation: so that nothing is gained by the Baptists by admitting the force of the objection. To say, that circumcision was in force under the Christian dispensation, is to admit the right of infants to church membership under the Christian dispensation: to deny that circumcision was in force under the Christian dispensation, is to give up the objection: in either case, the right of children to baptism is established. But the objection is urged upon a specific case: "How came it that Paul circumcised Timothy, after he had been baptized?" The explanation is easy. In the first place, circumcision

was practised in the case of Timothy, not as a sign and seal of the old dispensation, or as imposing obligation to observe the old Levitical rites in order to justification, but as a favorite national distinction which *the Jews* wished to observe. The mother of Timothy was a *Jewess*, and his father was a Greek, and Paul circumcised Timothy because "the Jews which were in those quarters" entertained national prejudices against his father, "for they knew he was a Greek." If a converted Jew in the present day were disposed to observe this rite in the case of his children, as a national distinction merely, while at the same time he admitted baptism as a sufficient sign and seal of the covenant under the Christian dispensation, the observance would be regarded as innocent, though unnecessary. Secondly, had Paul supposed that circumcision in the case of Timothy, or the Hebrew Christians, was observed upon any principle which affected the essential doctrines of Christianity, he would have firmly and fearlessly opposed it. Thus, when certain "false brethren" wished him to circumcise Titus, who was a *Gentile*, that they might use the apostle as authority in bringing other Gentile converts under bondage to the law of Moses, he resolutely refused to administer the rite, observing, "to whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." In the one case circumcision was admitted, as an infirmity of prejudice; in the other it was refused as involving a rejection of the fundamental doctrine of justification by faith. If the Baptists could prove that the apostles practised circumcision as a sign and seal of the *old* covenant, even then the right of infants to church membership under the Christian dispensation would follow, and so nothing would be gained by the argument. But Paul positively declares that circumcision, practised as a seal of the old covenant, involves a total denial of Christ, and the new

covenant; he also uniformly affirms that circumcision passed away with the old dispensation of which it was the seal: hence he could not have administered the rite in the case of Timothy, nor admitted it in the case of the Hebrew Christians, as a sign and seal of the new covenant under the Christian dispensation. Our fourth proposition follows:

4. Hence, infants ought to be baptized.

First. The church was not organized in the days of Christ, but under the old dispensation. The constitution under which any society or association is organized, determines who shall be members of it. The original constitution of the church recognised infants as members of it; and hence, as the church remains the same in all ages, infants to the end of time are to be formally recognised as a portion of its members. It was not a *new* church into which Gentile believers entered upon the opening of the Christian dispensation, but the old church, in which children had always been recognised as members, and which, *at the time* of the entering of the Gentiles, still received children. Had the church been organized in the days of Christ, *and infants been omitted*, then it might be conceded that they are not entitled to church membership: but as the constitution under which the church was organized has not been altered in this respect, infants, under the Christian dispensation, are entitled to church membership, and hence should be baptized.

Secondly. Circumcision bore the same relation to the covenant of salvation, under the Jewish dispensation, that baptism does to the same covenant, under the Christian dispensation. By circumcision under the Jewish dispensation, children received the outward sign of the covenant, and were received into the Jewish church; so by baptism under the Christian dispensation, they receive the outward sign of the same covenant, and are received into the Christian church. If children, at one time, though under a different

dispensation, have a right to the spiritual blessings of the covenant, they have at all times, and under all dispensations, the same right. Circumcision did not belong to the ceremonial law, but to the covenant; hence the abrogation of the Mosaic or ceremonial law, and the abolition of circumcision, cannot disannul the original covenant, and hence do not invalidate the rights of infants to the blessings of the covenant. "The law cannot disannul the covenant," nor set aside the "promises."[26] And as circumcision belonged, not to the ceremonial law, but to the covenant under the law, as baptism belongs to the same covenant under the gospel, both circumcision and baptism being initiating sacraments of the covenant, though under different dispensations; it follows that the meaning and application of baptism are the same under the gospel as were contained in circumcision under the law—and hence infants cannot justly be excluded from baptism. The covenant has undergone no change by express precept, which formerly recognised the rights of infants to church membership; the moral character of the infant is the same since the fall of man; the organization of the church has not been subjected to any modification with respect to infants since its origin in the time of Abraham; and consequently infants are entitled to the formal recognition of the whole scope of their rights under the gospel.

Thirdly. Baptism is substituted in the place of circumcision. This has been proved. But children, under the Jewish dispensation, were circumcised. Therefore, children under the Christian dispensation, should be baptized.

We now conclude the argument of this chapter. THE CHURCH IN ALL AGES, IS UNDER THE SAME COVENANT OF GRACE, THOUGH IT MAY BE UNDER DIFFERENT DISPENSA-

[26] Gal. iii. 17–21.

TIONS. HENCE, THE SEAL OF EVERY DISPENSATION IS A SEAL OF THE GENERAL COVENANT OF GRACE. THEREFORE, BAPTISM, THE SEAL OF THE COVENANT UNDER THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION, IS SUBSTITUTED FOR CIRCUMCISION, THE SEAL OF THE COVENANT UNDER THE JEWISH DISPENSATION. HENCE, INFANTS OUGHT TO BE BAPTIZED, AS INFANTS ARE EMBRACED IN THE GENERAL COVENANT, AND WERE SEALED BY CIRCUMCISION, AS THE HEIRS OF SALVATION, UNDER THE ABRAHAMIC AND MOSAIC DISPENSATIONS.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN HARMONY WITH THE DOCTRINE OF INFANT BAPTISM.

THE New Testament abounds with scriptures which cannot be satisfactorily and fully explained but in harmony with the doctrine of infant baptism.

1. I invite the reader's attention to the general commission of Christ to his apostles: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c.[1] How may we suppose the apostles, who were Jews, understood this? How may we suppose all the Jews understood this? How would missionaries, sent out from any of the pædobaptist denominations, understand it? Why, that they were authorized to include children, according to the *usages, manners,* and *laws* to which they had been accustomed. And how would Baptist missionaries understand it? Why, that children ought to be excepted? Now from every sound view of the usages, manners, and laws of the Jews, the conclusion is irresisti-

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19.

ble, that the apostles, commissioned by Christ to "baptize all nations," understood that children were embraced in the scope of their commission, as we shall now see. For many centuries before this commission was given, it had been the custom of the Jews to baptize all their proselytes from other nations, both parents and children.[2] "It is evident that the custom of the Jews before our Saviour's time (and, as they themselves affirm, from the beginning of their law) was to *baptize* as well as to circumcise any proselyte that came over to them from the nations. This does fully appear both from the books of the Jews themselves, and also of others that understood the Jewish customs and have written of them." In the words of Maimonides, the great interpreter of Jewish law: "By these three things did Israel enter into covenant, by circumcision, and baptism, and sacrifice. Circumcision was in Egypt, as it is written, *No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof*, &c. Baptism was in the wilderness just before the giving of the law: as it is written, *Sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes*, *i. e.* their whole bodies. And sacrifice: as it is said, *And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt-offerings*," &c.[3]

Talmud, Tract, Repud. "Israel does not enter into covenant but by these three things, by circumcision, baptism, and peace-offering; and the proselytes in like manner."[3]

And again, *Ad Tit. Cherithoth*, cap. 2. "*As you are, so shall the stranger be.* As you are, that is, as was done to your fathers. And what was done to them? Your fathers did not enter into covenant but by circumcision, and baptism, and sprinkling of blood. So neither do proselytes enter into covenant but by circumcision, baptism, and sprinkling of blood."[3]

[2] Lightfoot and Wootten.

[3] Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. vol. i. 11, 12, 13.

Rabbi Solomon in loco. "Our rabbies teach that our fathers entered into covenant by circumcision, and baptism, and sprinkling of blood."[4]

"And Mr. Selden, De Synedr. lib. i. cap. 3, observes that that saying of St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, "All our fathers were baptized unto Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea," would have been difficult for those to whom St. Paul wrote to make any sense of, had it not been a thing well known at the time when the apostle wrote, that the Jews looked upon themselves as having entered into covenant by baptism; and that St. Paul spoke as alluding to that. And Dr. Hammond concludes the same."[4]

Maimonides observes: "And so in all ages, when an ethnic is willing to enter into covenant, and gather himself under the wings of the majesty of God, and take upon him the yoke of the law; he must be circumcised and baptized, and bring a sacrifice. As it is written, *As you are, so shall the stranger be.* How are you? By circumcision, baptism, and bringing of a sacrifice. So likewise the stranger through all generations; by circumcision, and baptism, and bringing a sacrifice."

"Besides, the infant children of proselytes, at the father's desire, were circumcised, and baptized, and admitted as proselytes. The child's inability to declare or promise for himself was not regarded as a bar against his reception into covenant; but the desire of the father to dedicate him to the true God, was considered available, and sufficient to justify his admission."[5]

It was a custom of the Jews to baptize any child they found exposed in "the fields, woods, or highways by the heathen."

Maimonides, Halach Abidim, c. 8. "An Israelite that

[4] Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. vol. i. 11, 12, 13.

[5] Ibid. vol. i. 14.

takes a child, or finds a heathen infant, and baptizes him for a proselyte: behold he is a proselyte."

Hierosol. Javamoth, fol. 8. 4. "Behold, one finds an infant cast out, and baptizes him in the name of a servant. But if he baptize him in the name of a freeman; do thou also circumcise him in the name of a freeman."[6]

Dr. Lightfoot observes: "The baptizing of infants was a thing as well known in the church of the Jews, as ever it has been in the Christian church." And Selden and Wotton both testify, "that children, *however young*, were made proselytes."

The rabbies unanimously assert, that proselyte baptism had been the practice according to their law, *from the time of Moses down to their own age.*

The Jews expressed no surprise at the doctrine of baptism preached by John, as if it were a novelty, but they were surprised that *he* should baptize, as he did not acknowledge himself to be the Christ, nor Elias, nor that Prophet who should come. The Jews expected that they would baptize on their arrival. "Why baptizest *thou*, if thou be none of *these?*" And if John did not baptize children, the Jews might have inquired also, and probably would have done so, by what authority do you make this important and extraordinary innovation upon our laws and usages? Ainsworth, having shown at large the prevalence of the custom of proselyte baptism, adds at the conclusion, "Hereupon baptism was nothing strange to the Jews when John the Baptist began his ministry. They made question of his person that did it, but not of the thing itself." Thus, it is easy to see, that the comprehensive commission of Christ, "Go, and teach all nations, and baptize them," &c., plainly implied that the apostles, who were Jews, understood that they were not to

[6] Wall's Inf. Bap. vol. i. 20.

depart from the old law and usage of the Jewish church on the subject of baptism. As the ancient custom of baptizing infants had undergone no change by explicit enactment, and no particular exception respecting it was made in the great commission of Christ to his apostles, it is clear, that when they came to the cases of infants, at any time, in their administration of baptism, they felt it their duty to baptize them also. Christ made no alteration in this matter in the church in which he and his apostles lived, and consequently none can now be made without some well attested authority from heaven.

Suppose the word *circumcise* had been adopted by Christ instead of *baptize*, in the great commission, no doubt could have existed respecting the scope of the commission to the apostles: and infants, without any specification being made, would have been regarded as proper subjects of circumcision, according to the unrepealed laws and usages of the Jewish church. In like manner, according to the unrepealed usages of the Jewish church, the apostles must have felt bound to recognise infants as proper subjects of baptism. Had the word *circumcise* been adopted instead of baptize, the apostles could not have considered children excluded—unless exception had been explicitly made. Consequently, the adoption of a rite, *baptism*, to which they had been always accustomed, and which they knew had been long and universally administered to proselytes, did not involve in their minds any exception of children. They were commanded now to "PROSELYTE"—*μαθητευω, matheteuo*—all nations. "They knew what initiatory ceremonies were performed in the case of proselytes, namely, CIRCUMCISION, BAPTISM, and SACRIFICE. But Jesus had abolished the old Jewish dispensation, and consequently its initiatory rite with it. He had also offered up himself as a sacrifice for sin once for all, and thus the "sacrifice" required was also set aside. But BAP-

TISM was *retained*, and was positively instituted by Christ as the sole initiatory rite of the Christian church. In the first council of the Christian church, in the year 49, when the question of circumcision was discussed, the decision of these very apostles was, that circumcision should be dispensed with under the Christian dispensation. Baptism remaining, and being enjoined by our Saviour as the initiatory sacrament of the Christian church, the apostles were bound, under the most solemn responsibilities, to administer it in the case of children, in accordance with the earliest institution of their laws, usages, and customs, especially when they knew that their commission *enlarged*, instead of *diminished*, the blessings and privileges of the everlasting covenant. As Gentiles, under the Jewish dispensation, were received into the church by circumcision, sacrifice, and baptism, and as children were so received with their parents, so under the Christian dispensation, as Christ has abolished circumcision and sacrifice, and retained baptism, the children of Gentile parents ought to be received into the Christian church by baptism alone—and so the apostles must have understood it. Now, Christ might just as well have retained circumcision, and dropped baptism, had he seen proper to do so, and then none of the present day, or of any other age, without express prohibition, would have denied children the right to circumcision. But as Christ has retained baptism as sufficient without circumcision, certainly children are as much entitled to baptism now, without express prohibition, as they were to circumcision before circumcision was dropped or abolished by Christ. In a word, *before* the coming of Christ, Gentile children were entitled to the whole of the initiatory rite above; surely, then, after the coming of Christ, they are entitled to that part which is retained and enjoined, to answer the end of the whole of the original, complex, and burdensome rite. Christ "took,"

says Dr. Lightfoot, "into his hands baptism such as he found it; adding only this, that he exalted it to a nobler purpose and a larger sense." And he observes, "The whole nation knew well enough that infants used to be baptized. There was no need of a precept for that which had ever by common use prevailed. It was therefore necessary, on the other side, that there should have been an express and plain order that infants and little children should not be baptized, if our Saviour had meant that they should not. For since it was ordinary, in all ages preceding, to have infants baptized, if Christ would have had that usage to be abolished, he would have expressly forbidden it. So that his and the Scriptures' silence in this matter does confirm and establish infant baptism for ever."

The reason of things is obvious. In the original constitution of the plan of redemption, God designed that baptism should finally become the initiatory rite of that dispensation which should embrace "all nations." Before, however, this dispensation could be properly introduced, it was necessary that the Jewish dispensation should be instituted as preliminary. From the peculiarity of the Jewish dispensation, its initiatory rite embraced circumcision and sacrifice; and in case of proselytes from Gentile nations, baptism was added. And why added in the case of Gentiles? Because, among other reasons, but principally this, when the Jewish dispensation should be set aside, or merged in the Christian dispensation, and that part of the initiatory rite which referred especially to the Jews should be set aside also, the remaining part, which referred especially to the Gentiles, should still be retained. And so it was customary among the Jews to use bread and wine at the conclusion of the celebration of the Passover, which custom Jesus sanctioned and *perpetuated* at the last passover.[7] Thus the blessed

[7] Luke xxii. 19–20.

Jesus sanctioned proselyte baptism, and solemnly appointed it as a standing sacrament till the consummation of the Christian dispensation—and the apostles must have understood it as still embracing children. It may be added, that this modification of the ancient initiatory rite of proselytes, is the more proper and wise, because it is less burdensome—universal in its application—and more expressive of the dispensation to which it is attached. This view is forcibly sustained by a reference to other parts of the great commission. "Go ye therefore and *teach*"—the word rendered *teach* is not διδάσκω, *didasko*, but μαθητεύω, *matheteuo*—"disciple, proselyte[8] all nations"—the very work of the Jewish dispensation, *and that which was designed to succeed the Jewish dispensation.* "Teaching them to observe"—διδάσκω—*didasko*, is the word now employed. It would be palpable tautology to say, "Go *teach* all nations—teaching them," &c; but when the phraseology is changed, "Go, disciple, proselyte all nations—teaching them, imparting instruction to them, training them up in all the precepts and doctrines which I have commanded you," all is consistent, plain, and impressive. The full and satisfactory explanation of the great commission then will run as follows: Go ye into all the world, and proselyte all nations, initiating them by baptism into the Christian church, and teaching them, training them up in all the doctrines and precepts of the Christian dispensation. Retain and perpetuate unto the Gentiles that part of the original rite of initiation that especially referred to them, and with which they are already familiar; and as children can be trained for the kingdom of God, embrace them in your commission as proper subjects of baptism, according to the ancient laws and usages of the

[8] The highest authority, classical and biblical, give μαθητεύω this comprehensive signification.

Jewish dispensation. Now when in addition to the know ledge the apostles had of the ancient laws and usages of the Jewish church in the case of proselytes, it is considered that the apostles knew and taught that circumcision was superseded by baptism as an initiating ordinance, no rational doubt can remain respecting the comprehensiveness of the evangelical commission. Granting that the apostles paid no regard to ancient laws and usages, even then, upon the ground of the *substitutory* character of baptism, they must have considered themselves as laid under obligation, and invested with authority, to administer baptism to infants under the gospel commission. But when the force of habit, that is, the force of long established laws and usages, is superadded to this consideration, it is morally certain that our conclusion respecting the scope of the apostles' views of the great commission is correct.

The fact that the believing Jews regarded their children as proper subjects of circumcision only, and not of baptism, on the expression of faith by any Jewish parents, does not affect the question at all—*this was the error of their own;* for the gospel concluded all under sin, recognising neither Jew nor Greek as entitled to special privileges, and hence embraces "all the world" in the range of its influence, and comprehends "every creature" in the number of its objects. But "little children," it is objected, "are incapable of instruction, and therefore they are not included in the terms of the great commission." What, are they not to be taught the doctrines of the gospel? Are they not to hear of salvation by Jesus Christ? Was not Timothy taught in the Scriptures from a child? Was not the Jewish child, at the earliest age possible, taught the very first part of the ten commandments: "Honor thy father?" Did not the admonition of Solomon fall upon the ear of the child as soon

as instruction could be communicated: "Remember now thy Creator?"

Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, exhorted the "children to obey their parents," and the fathers that they should "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

It is further objected, "that the Jews were not accustomed to receive proselytes till the destruction of the second temple, A. D. 70." Upon unquestionable testimony, which we have adduced, proselytes were received into the Jewish church long before the coming of Christ. But granting that proselytes were not received by baptism till A. D. 70, then we have it admitted by the Baptists, that *children* were baptized seventy years after the coming of Christ. This was in the very midst of the apostles' days! And therefore it was by apostolic authority that the Jews baptized the *children* of proselytes? And it is unaccountable why the Jews should, and the Christians should not, baptize children. Epictetus, a heathen writer, who lived, according to Dr. Lardner, A. D. 109, and according to Le Clerc, 104, and who was about sixty years old when he wrote the following quotation, and obtained his information about thirty years earlier, which brings him up to the apostolic age, says, "When we see any one wavering, we are wont to say, This is not a Jew, but acts one. But when he assumes the sentiments of one who hath been *baptized* and *circumcised*, then he both really is, and is called a Jew." Mr. Booth, a distinguished Baptist, admits that "the children of proselytes were baptized along with their parents."

Again, it is objected: "It is not commanded in the great commission to baptize infants, therefore they are not to be baptized." To which I briefly answer: it is not *forbidden* to baptize infants, therefore they are to be baptized, because the original law in their case is unrepealed.

Secondly. Peter's first sermon. "Then Peter said unto

them, Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost. For the promise is to you and to *your children*, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."[9] This, we say, is a positive declaration and recognition of the right of infants to baptism under the Christian dispensation. "The promise"—what promise? The promise of redemption by Jesus Christ, a promise that runs through the Bible—made to Adam—"the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" repeated to Abraham—"in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;" affirmed by Christ—"I am of the seed of Abraham;" fulfilled by Christ—"it is finished;" proclaimed by Christ—"go ye therefore and teach all nations *baptizing* them in the name, &c.—*beginning* at Jerusalem;" and preached by Peter on this occasion at Jerusalem—"for the promise is unto you, *and to your children*." Children then are here *specifically* included in the promise, and hence they can be no more denied baptism, than they can be excluded from the promise—can no more be denied baptism, than the converted Jews who embraced the promise could be denied baptism—are just as clearly recognised as entitled to baptism, because embraced in the promise, as the converted Jews were who embraced the promise and were baptized. To be embraced in the promise, is to be entitled to the seal of the promise, which is baptism: "children" are embraced in the promise, and therefore are entitled to baptism: "children" are *specifically* embraced in the promise—"children," therefore, are *specifically* entitled to baptism. This then is a positive, specific, scriptural recognition and declaration of the right of children to baptism. "*The* promise"—the everlasting covenant of salvation—of which circumcision

[9] Acts ii. 38, 39.

was the seal under the Jewish dispensation, and infants received this seal under the Jewish dispensation. "*The* promise"—the everlasting covenant of salvation—but baptism is the seal of this covenant under the Christian dispensation, and therefore both parents and children should be baptized, for Peter declares that both parents and "children" are included in "the promise." The argument of the Baptists runs thus: "The promise is unto you, and therefore you are to be baptized: the promise is also unto your children, but they are *not* to be baptized." This makes Peter contradict himself, annulling the very reason for the baptism of *the children*, which he had made the ground of the baptism of *the parents*. Indeed, the Baptists have inverted the order of things, and in doing so, have excluded one party altogether from baptism. *Antecedent* to repentance and faith children have a right to baptism; and *subsequent* to repentance and faith the adult has a right to baptism; and *because* the adult repents and believes he has a right to the very privilege which the child had antecedently. So far therefore from excluding children from baptism, *adults themselves have not* a right to baptism till they repent and believe. And hence Peter says, "*Repent*, and be baptized, every one of you," &c. That is, repentance in adults exalts them to equal privileges with children; in other words, invests adults with a right to the privileges which the children *already* possess. "*For* the promise is unto *you*, and to your children." That is, "your children" are *already* included in "the promise," and therefore are *now* entitled to baptism, *the seal* of the promise; but you, having forfeited all right by transgression to the blessings of "the promise," can recover right to those blessings only by repentance. The reason why baptism is connected with *repentance* in the case of the adults is, because they had forfeited all right to baptism by transgression. More is

included in the scope of baptism than in that of repentance, repentance being limited to adults, and baptism being extended to both children, and to adults that repent. As repentance cannot be applied to, or required of infants, it cannot be made a prerequisite in their case to baptism, and on this account solely they cannot be justly excluded from baptism. And we conclude, that Peter, so far from repealing the old divine statute that included infants in the covenant of grace, positively reaffirms their interest in the covenant, and so confirms their unconditional right to baptism, its seal under the Christian dispensation—a right which cannot be denied them without violating a fundamental principle of the plan of salvation.

It may be added, Peter and the rest of the apostles were well acquainted with four things at this time, first, that "the promise" of the "everlasting covenant," made with Abraham, embraced "children," "little ones;" secondly, that the children of proselytes, from the first, had been baptized with their parents; thirdly, that they addressed Jews on this occasion, who understood the scope of "the promise," and who had always been accustomed to bring their children under the same covenant with themselves; and fourthly, that baptism was substituted in the place of circumcision. That, Peter, therefore, included the young children at this time, cannot be rationally questioned without setting aside these considerations. Indeed, Peter EXPLICITLY MENTIONS CHILDREN *as embraced in the covenant still in force, and in his commission received from Christ;* and if there were no other passage in the New Testament that refers to them directly or indirectly, by name or by implication, this single positive specification of children were sufficient to establish the divine and apostolic authority of infant baptism. Specifications of exceptions would have been required for departure from the old laws and usages familiar to the Jews;

but so far from this, in accordance with *the established principles and known feelings* of the Jewish nation, Peter expressly includes children, as entitled to the religious privileges of the new dispensation, in common with their parents: "for the promise is unto you *and to* YOUR CHILDREN." Peter himself, as a Jew, could not except them—or if he did, he must have satisfactorily vindicated his conduct before the scrupulous Jews. The parents were baptized because the promise of salvation was unto them: but it certainly will be admitted on all hands, that the promise of salvation includes little children; and as the greater blessing involves the less, all who are entitled to salvation have as just and valid a title to baptism; and hence, children have as good and valid a title to baptism as their parents—and so Peter included the children. That is, the promise of salvation by Jesus Christ, the seed of Abraham, is unto you and your children, and therefore you and your children are equally entitled to baptism, the initiatory rite of the Christian dispensation. How would you justify the declaration of Peter except on the ground that children were still embraced in the original covenant, and therefore were entitled to the same initiatory seal with their parents? Nothing else could have justified or explained Peter's reference to *children* on the day of Pentecost; for certainly the children could not "repent" nor believe; and but with reference to baptism, their name might have been omitted altogether. Peter well knew, however, that reference to children was necessary in order to remind them of the *continuation* of their title to the outward seal of the covenant made with Abraham, and to express the ample range of the Christian dispensation in all ages of time. Had he omitted the children, the Jews would at once have replied, you preach not the whole promise made to our father Abraham, for it expressly embraces our "*children*," "our LITTLE ONES:" if we enter the Christian

church, therefore, we must be permitted to take our children with us.

The fact that the apostle states repentance as a prerequisite, has reference alone to those of *responsible* age, and cannot therefore invalidate the title of children to baptism which they had, because included in the promise. Reference to "the gift of the Holy Ghost," in this passage, places no barrier in the way of infant baptism—for it must first be proved that no special blessing is conferred upon children who are baptized, before this objection can be of any force. If there be any efficacy in the prayers of God's people at the time, or any benefit connected with covenanted privileges, there can be no doubt that certain special spiritual influences are communicated to the child consecrated to God in baptism, but to what extent, it cannot, in the very nature of things, be definitely assumed. The phrase, "As many as the Lord our God shall call," includes both Jews and Gentiles, in all ages of the Christian dispensation, who shall hear and obey the gospel. It is objected by Baptist writers, that "the promise referred to is evidently that which the apostle had previously announced in the closing verse of the passage he had quoted from the prophet Joel: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Hinton's Hist. of Baptism, p. 92. And Judson and Pendleton observe, "It is evident that this promise refers, not to the covenant of Abraham, but to the promise recorded in Joel ii. 28: 'And it shall come to pass saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy,' &c." Judson on Baptism, p. 49. Pendleton on Baptism and Communion, p. 26. To this objection, we reply, in the first place, that the covenant made with Abraham is commonly, in the New Testament, referred to as the PROMISE, in contradistinction to the ceremonial and temporal promises of the Old Testament. "For the

PROMISE, that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the PROMISE of none effect. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end that the PROMISE might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. The covenant which was before confirmed of God in Christ, the law, which was 430 years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the PROMISE of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more PROMISE; but God gave it to Abraham by PROMISE." Romans iv. 13, 14. Gal. iii. 17, &c. Gal. iv. 28. This was the "promise" to which Peter referred on the day of Pentecost. In the second place, the same apostle, on another occasion, proposes the same argument, to the same people, the Jews, in other language: "Ye are the children of the *covenant* which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." Acts iii. 25. On this occasion, the apostle enforces repentance for the remission of sins, (ver. 19;) so that no one can entertain a rational doubt respecting his meaning in this instance; and thus the apostle explains his own words as referring to the covenant made with Abraham. In the third place, Peter's reference to "all that are afar off," is proof that he referred to the Abrahamic covenant. The Jews were already in the church, and hence did not need a new call into it,—"the *promise* is to you and your children." But the Gentiles were "afar off"—and hence the reference of Peter could not have been to the prophecy of Joel, which belonged to the Jews, but to the covenant made with Abraham, in whose "seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed." Peter therefore, when he said, "the promise is

to you and your children," had his mind on the Abrahamic covenant. In the fourth place, how can it be possible that Peter referred to the prophecy of Joel on the day of Pentecost, when he says expressly that the prophecy of Joel referred to the miraculous gifts of the Spirit bestowed, and wonderful events exhibited on the day of Pentecost? Peter vindicated these miraculous displays of the Holy Spirit by referring to the prophecy of Joel: that is, the prophecy of Joel referred to the baptism of fire, the mighty rushing wind, the speaking with tongues, the prophesying, and all the stupendous scenes witnessed on the day of Pentecost. All this was distinct from the reference made by Peter to the "PROMISE" made to Abraham: he refers to *this*, not in vindication of the solemn scenes of the day, but as *encouragement* to those who were cut to the heart by the Holy Ghost under his preaching. In the fifth place, the miraculous gifts referred to by Joel, and poured out by the Holy Ghost upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, are not poured out upon all the Jews, their children, and those who are afar off; and hence the "promise" that embraces all "the Jews," their children, and those who are "afar off," was the Abrahamic covenant, and not the prophecy of Joel. And finally, no matter whether "the promise" referred to was the prophecy of Joel or the Abrahamic covenant; in either case, it is made by Peter *the reason for the baptism of children.*

3. "But Jesus said, suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God."[9] First, the kingdom of heaven often means the church of God on earth; that is, as the church has already been organized under the old dispensation, and the right of children to membership in it has been continued, suffer them

[10] Matt. xix. 14.

to come unto me, for of such is my church, whose foundation I am about to establish by my death. Repeal not the old law, or that part of the original constitution that provides for the church membership of children. Secondly, the phrase, "kingdom of heaven," sometimes refers to the kingdom of glory. If so, then by the most forcible inference, infants are worthy of association with the church or kingdom of God on earth. What! worthy of the kingdom of glory, through the merits of Christ, and yet not worthy, through the same merits, of association with the church, which is so soon to compose a part of the kingdom of glory! Worthy of association with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, principalities, powers, thrones, and dominions, in heaven, and yet not worthy of association with imperfect men on earth! What, while holy angels with joy stand at the portals of immortality to receive the infant saints, and bear them to the Saviour, men, pious men, cherishing intensely the hope of reunion with their children in heaven, stand with a scrupulous vigilance at the door of the church on earth, and deny them a formal recognition of their right to all the blessings of the atonement! While Christ received them graciously, and pressed them tenderly to his bosom on earth, the church of Christ repulses them from her bosom! and thinks she is acting the part of a mother! that she inflicts no positive injury upon the "babes in Christ!" While the church triumphant receives children into the dearest, holiest communion, the church militant, contending amid the trials and perils of time, denies them admission into her safe and hallowed courts, and excludes them from a participation in her sacred and holy privileges! Why are the two great branches of the church, the one entered upon retribution, and the other in probation, still under the covenant of grace on earth, so different in this respect? Here is a family: the parents are in the Baptist

church. The parents die in the triumphs of faith, and ascend to the church triumphant, leaving their child, a young heir of glory, excluded from the church on earth. But the child soon follows, and is reunited with his parents in heaven—though he lived and died *out* of the church on earth—though he was denied association, by a formal dedication, with the church on earth—though the title of children under the covenant is as good *before* as *after* death, and though the title of Christ to the infant is the same on earth as it is in heaven. And hence, as Christ and his church are the same in heaven and on earth, and children are worthy of the kingdom of heaven—worthy of its glories, and association with saints and angels in the immediate presence of Christ—they are worthy of association with the church on earth.

"I take these little lambs," said he,
"And lay them in my breast;
Protection they shall find in me,
In me be ever blest.

"Death may the bands of life unloose,
But can't dissolve my love:
Millions of infant souls compose
The family above."

"Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Blessed opinion of infants! Let it be the epitaph on their tombstone. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Blessed Jesus, we adopt it, and say, OF SUCH IS THY CHURCH ON EARTH, since what thou hast judged to be worthy of thy church in heaven, we cheerfully acknowledge is entitled to formal admission into thy church on earth.

Thus, if the phrase, "kingdom of heaven," means the church of God on earth, then children have, upon the authority of Christ himself, a positive recognition of the continuation of their original title to church membership—

and the question of infant baptism is settled for ever in their favor. But if the phrase, "kingdom of heaven," means the kingdom of glory, then by the most convincing and satisfactory inference, children have a right to association with the church on earth, which right the church is bound to acknowledge by a formal and solemn consecration in baptism. That is, in either case, infants are here judged by Infinite Wisdom capable of the covenant of mercy; and so infants, "little ones," were admitted into covenant, under the Old Testament dispensation, and received the seal of the covenant. Therefore, "suffer them to come unto me." But Christ is not now present with us—how then can infants be brought to him as he commands, but by dedication in baptism? This is the general argument. But to be more particular:

The original term as used by Matthew is, *τὰ παιδία—ta paidia—the children;* and as used by Luke is, *τα βρέφη—ta brephe—the very little children;* "for of *such*" *very little children* is the kingdom of heaven. That is, little children who have not yet arrived at an age of accountability—all "*such*" are unconditionally entitled to all the blessings of my death, and embraced in my promise, or the everlasting covenant; and consequently they should receive the seal of the covenant, and so be received into my visible church. They have the thing signified, which is membership in the spiritual church, and therefore they should have the sign of it, which is baptism. The phrase, "*the little children,*" is strictly *specific* and *designative,* and thus Christ himself positively declares that all children indiscriminately are unconditionally entitled to the kingdom of heaven. But if children have a right to *heaven,* or the state of blessedness after death, this is the very right of the believer which is recognised in baptism; indeed, this is the highest and most important signification of baptism as a seal on the part of

God. Believers are "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ"—heirs to "an inheritance incorruptible:" so are children. But baptism, as a seal on the part of God, formally recognises the heirship of the believer; hence children, who are invested with the same heirship, are entitled to the same formal recognition as heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

But if the expression, "kingdom of God," mean the *invisible, spiritual church,* which is composed of all true *believers,* then infants are in the same church with believers, and so should be baptized. But further, if the expression, "kingdom of God," mean the *visible* church, then the point in debate is at once settled in favor of the baptism of infants. But yet further, the kingdom of God comprehends all the redeemed on earth and in heaven, that is, the church in heaven, the spiritual or invisible, and the church on earth, the visible; therefore to be a member of the *spiritual* church, is to be a member of the whole church, except its *visible* organization, in which baptism is incorporated by divine enactment as a sensible formal recognition of association already existing with the spiritual church, as is the case with children; so that children cannot be excluded from baptism, without excluding them from the kingdom of God altogether. Admit that children are associated with Christ's spiritual kingdom—and no one will deny this—and it follows, that they have a right to the whole kingdom, visible and invisible; and baptism is the formal seal of this right *now* existing—a comprehensive right to be enjoyed conditionally, should they live to adult age, and unconditionally, should they die in infancy. "The kingdom of God, is a phrase which is *constantly employed in Scripture* to denote that state of things which is placed under the avowed administration of the Messiah." Robert Hall's Works, vol. i. 372. Children, then, being under the avowed administration of

Christ, which extends over the church in heaven and on earth, cannot be justly excluded from baptism, without legitimately excluding them from the administration of Christ altogether.

It has been objected, that these *little* children were *youth*, arrived at accountable age. But Matthew and Mark say, "They brought unto him, *παιδία—paidia*—LITTLE *children*," —not *παιδας—paidas*—children or youth. And Luke, as we have observed, says, "They brought unto him also, *τὰ βρέφη—ta brephe*—INFANTS," which identical word is translated *babe* in other parts of the New Testament.[11] Besides, the command of Christ has reference to infants while in a state of infancy, or it can have no meaning that is intelligible. *Bring* them to me *now*, while they are *babes*, which injunction can have no reference to *education*, at such a time, but positively enjoins a formal consecration of them to the service of Christ. It has been assumed, that "of such" signifies adult Christians of a childlike disposition. But the reason why children were brought to Christ to be blessed by him, is to be found in *themselves:* "they brought little children, *that* he might put his hands on *them*, and bless *them*—and he took *them* in his arms, and blessed *them*." Moreover, what reason could there be to bless little children because adult Christians were to be of a childlike disposition? Besides, he had presented the child specifically as a model for adult Christians on another occasion: "Except *ye* be converted, and *become as* little children, *ye* shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."[12]

"But, ah," says another, "these little children were young Christians." Not so, for they were *brought* to Jesus. Secondly, "*Jesus took them up in his arms.*" And thirdly,

[11] For instance, Luke i. 41–44; ii. 12–16; Acts vii. 19; 1 Pet. ii. 2.
[12] Matt. xviii. 3.

the disciples never would have "rebuked" any for bringing young Christians to Jesus that he might bless them. But that no doubt may remain respecting the age of these *little* children, consider the following testimony from Matthew Matthew and all the Evangelists agree, that Jesus compared his real disciples to *these little* children, when he said, as above, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children," &c. The displeasure manifested by the disciples was exhibited, in the expression of Jewish feelings, by the Pharisees, upon Christ's entry into Jerusalem: "who, when they saw the children crying in the temple, *Hosanna to the Son of David!* were *sore displeased;* and said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus answered them, have ye never read, *out of the mouths of* BABES AND SUCKLINGS THOU HAST PERFECTED PRAISE?" Certainly babes and sucklings were infants; and certainly, if out of their mouths *God had perfected praise,* they ought to be included by baptism with those who render him imperfect praises. And so when *little* children were brought to Christ for his blessing, the disciples rebuked those that brought them; that is, thought them *too young* to receive any spiritual good. But Mark describes our Lord as being "much displeased" at the conduct of his disciples, immediately assuring them that infants are entitled to his blessing, because they are of his kingdom, or, under the everlasting covenant, entitled to membership in the Christian church. How indeed, after these rebukes, could the disciples of Christ and the haughty Pharisees look with indifference upon "*little ones*"—"*babes and sucklings?*" And why should we hesitate a moment to consecrate them to him by baptism, who, with ineffable tenderness, benignity, and love, took them in his arms,[13] put his hands upon them, and blessed

[13] Dr. Clarke, in his commentary, observes, "'And he took them up in his arms'—one of the Itala reads *in sinu suo*—'in his bosom.' Jesus

them, and accepted their hosannas as the perfection of his praise?

4. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."[14]

Here the child is made the standard of the adult believer. Such a person is baptized as a copy, and received into the church, preparatory to his reception into heaven. What, baptize the *copy*, and not the *standard?* Receive the copy into the church because it conforms to the standard, and yet reject the standard! Why, it seems that the standard were incomplete if it be not baptized; indeed, that the standard has a stronger claim to church membership than the copy, or at least that the child should be baptized before the copy can properly and legally recognise it as a standard. In a word, one who baptizes adult believers *as* little children, cannot refuse baptism to the little children themselves.

5. "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."[15]

Adults who present themselves for admission into the church by baptism, are in a state of "justification," acceptance, and pardon, obtained by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But as infants, who had been brought into a state of condemnation by the "offence of Adam," have been restored to a state of justification, pardon, and divine favor,

Christ *loves* little children; and they are the objects of his most peculiar care. Who can account for their continual *preservation* and *support* while exposed to so many dangers, but on the ground of a *peculiar* and *extraordinary* providence?" And he adds, under the next verse, "though *little children*, they were capable of receiving Christ's blessing." If Christ embraced them, why should not his *church* embrace them? Why not dedicate them to God by baptism? And he ascribes neglect of this duty to "unaccountable bigotry or carelessness."

[14] Matt. xviii. 3. [15] Rom. v. 18.

by the "righteousness" or atonement of Christ, they also should be received into the church by baptism. In other words, all persons, without exception, who are in a state of "justification," ought to be baptized. Infants are in a state of justification, and therefore they ought to be baptized.

6. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have PUT ON Christ."[16]

That is, ye who have been baptized, whether in infancy or adult age, have entered into the visible kingdom of Christ, since baptism under the Christian dispensation, is substituted as a badge of profession, for circumcision, as a badge of profession, under the Jewish dispensation. And so the following verse: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Now Abraham, under a different dispensation, *but under the same covenant of grace*, was permitted to bring his children with him into covenant with God; and as a change of dispensations does not affect any change in the general covenant of grace, consequently the corresponding change of the initiatory rite from circumcision to baptism, does not exclude infants from covenant relations under the Christian dispensation. That is, believers in Christ, under the Christian dispensation, are reckoned as children of Abraham. Faith brings the Gentile parent into the same relation to the covenant of salvation that Abraham sustained by faith under the Abrahamic dispensation; and therefore the children of Gentile believers are as much entitled to the initiating seal of the covenant under the Christian dispensation, as the children of Abraham were under the covenant when made with him.

7. "That the covenant that was confirmed before in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, *cannot disannul*, that it should make *the promise* of

[16] Gal. iii. 27.

none effect."[17] THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN, *therefore, to the outward, visible sign and seal of the covenant, is* POSITIVELY CONFIRMED *and* CONTINUED *under the gospel.* "*None* effect"—cannot effect any change in rights of children set forth in the original constitution. The Baptists call for *positive* commands—here is a clear, unqualified, comprehensive, *positive* recognition of the entire scope of the original covenant of grace made with Abraham—and that covenant specifically recognised the right of children to covenant relations, which right, Paul positively declares, *has not been annulled, but is still in full force.*

8. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that ALL OUR FATHERS were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were ALL *baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*"[18]

Why would not the apostle have us ignorant of this impressive and important circumstance of the Jewish dispensation? Because he regarded it in the solemn character of an "example." (Ver. 11.) And who were these "fathers?" They were those very Jews who came out of Egypt, and were destroyed in the wilderness, and those LITTLE ONES, *children,* which in that day—the time of the passage of the Red Sea—"had no knowledge of good and evil," and, surviving the journey through the wilderness, entered with Joshua into the possession of Canaan. Thus, the baptism of these "LITTLE ONES" happened unto them "for *our examples,* upon whom the ends of the world are come." Besides, *τύποι, tupoi,* here translated "examples," generally has a figurative signification in the Old Testament, representing some future institutions under the New Testament, and therefore may be regarded somewhat in the light of prophecy. And thus, as the baptism of the fathers and

[17] Gal. iii. 17.

[18] 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

their children, under the cloud and in the sea, bound them over to legal obedience, and united them to the church in the wilderness, so the apostle reminds us that baptism, under the gospel dispensation, binds believers and their children to evangelical obedience, and unites them with the Christian church. If such be not the meaning of the passage before us, then the apparent solicitude of the apostle is divested of its impressive force and dignity. The "fathers" referred to were baptized *in infancy*, "in the cloud and in the sea," and the apostle expressly designates and enjoins *their baptism* AS AN EXAMPLE FOR US. The Baptists demand either precept or example for infant baptism in the Bible: *here are* BOTH *in the same chapter.*

9. "That he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him."[19] Are children through mercy in Christ worthy of union in this general association? Are they to be regarded as the babes in this vast family of God? Unquestionably they are. Then they ought to be formally admitted into his church.

10. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy."[20]

The apostle here incidentally refers to the practice of infant baptism, as if it were a subject universally admitted in his days. "Else were your children unclean, but now they are holy," that is, ἁγιά, here translated "holy," commonly means those who are baptized into the faith of Christ. Its corresponding Hebrew term, *kedushim*, signified all the Jews who entered into covenant with God, under the Jewish dispensation, by circumcision—and infants were circumcised. And so the Jews considered the children of heathens

[19] Eph. i. 10.

[20] 1 Cor. vii. 14.

unholy who were born *before* their parents became proselytes, and all the children holy who were born *after* their parents became proselytes. The apostle does not mean that holiness of nature is *hereditary*, but that relatively, children are entitled to baptism.

If the Baptists so explain these scriptures as to make them inapplicable to infants, then I ask, in what scriptures is the salvation of infants referred to? All such scriptures will support our argument just as well as those we have adduced. But if they explain these away, and all others like them, they cut off, at a single stroke, the last hope of infant salvation; because upon this mode of interpretation, the absence of all reference in the Scriptures, expressed or implied, to infant salvation, as certainly deprives them of all title to salvation, as the absence of scriptures explicitly recognising and confirming the title of children to church membership would deprive them of baptism. Certainly, the foundation of the Baptist Church is not established upon the condemnation of all infants under the Christian dispensation. And yet I do not see how it is possible to deny the right of infants to baptism, the sign, without at the same time denying their right to salvation, the thing signified: and so we conclude, all scriptures that recognise infants as proper subjects of salvation, without the discharge of any conditions on their part, at the same time comprehend a recognition of their right to baptism, independently of the discharge of any conditions on their part whatever. And when to this consideration it is added, THAT THERE ARE SCRIPTURES THAT FURNISH BOTH PRECEPT AND EXAMPLE FOR INFANT BAPTISM, THE CONCLUSION IS IN THE HIGHEST DEGREE SATISFACTORY, THAT INFANT BAPTISM IS AN INSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH, *under the Christian dispensation, and made solemnly binding on the church to the end of time.*

CHAPTER V.

SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT CONTINUED.

Oikos—Oikia.[1]

INFANT baptism derives the strongest support from a proper discrimination between the meaning of the terms οἶκος, *oikos*—and οἰκία, *oikia*. If the translators of the Old and New Testaments had observed the difference in the specific meaning of these two terms, the Baptist Church never could have obtained a distinct and separate existence in the world. Upon a candid examination of the Old and New Testaments, it will be found, that the sacred writers use the term OIKOS, HOUSE, in the specific sense of FAMILY, with special reference to INFANTS; and, therefore, when the apostles say they baptized *houses, whole houses*, the terms are synonymous with families, and are used with special reference to infants as included in the sacred rite. Indeed, the more learned Baptists now admit, that the term *oikos*, as it is now used in the New Testament, is synonymous with *family*, and consequently, that it includes infants—and as the learned are the only proper judges of an argument of this character, the validity and authority of infant baptism are hereby supported and established by the unanimous decision of the learned world.

THESE TERMS ARE NOT INTERCHANGEABLE.

1. Let us first investigate the meaning of the term

[1] See Taylor's Apostolic Baptism.

OIKIA, oikia. "And the wise men came into the *oikia*—out-houses—the stable where the young child was, and found him and his parents."[2] "He (Peter) lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner, whose *oikia* is by the seaside."[3] Now a tanner's business requires much space, and several out-houses, and so Simon selected the seaside. The men who were sent to inquire for Peter, inquired for the *oikia* of Simon, and stood before *the gate* of the tanner's yard.[4]

Consider Peter's supernatural deliverance from prison, as it is described in the 12th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. "And when he had considered the thing he came to the house—*oikia*—of Mary; and he knocked at the door of *the gate*"—the outer gate. And Rhoda *came out* to listen, but "she opened not *the gate* for gladness, but *ran in*"—(ver. 14;) ran across the court-yard back again—"and told how Peter stood before the gate." *Oikos is never substituted for oikia.* Throughout the Old and New Testaments, the sacred writers never interchange the one for the other; every writer preserves a distinction. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all say of the paralytic, "take up thy bed, and go to thy house—*oikon.*" "Devouring widow's houses"—*oikia,* not *oikos.* The dwelling of Cornelius is called his *oikos,* by the servants of Cornelius, by Cornelius himself, and by Peter twice;[5] but the dwelling of Simon, the tanner, is called *oikia,* by the angel, by the evangelist, by Cornelius, and by Peter. Again: *oikos* is a masculine noun, and *oikia* is feminine. Masculine and feminine nouns are not interchangeable in the Greek. Again: *a part* can never be equivalent to the whole, nor be interchangeable with it. *Oikos* may be a part of *oikia,* and thus the notion of a retired apartment of a large building is frequently expressed by the term *oikos* by the ancient Greek writers.

[2] Matt. ii. 11. [3] Acts x. 6. [4] Acts xi. 11. [5] Acts xi. 12, 13.

2. The term *oikos* alone is used in the sense of family, and CHILDREN are the primary and immediate objects of *oikos, house, family.* It is impossible to separate the idea of children from the term *oikos, house, family.* Thus, "house of Israel"—"house of Jacob"—"house of Judah"—"house of David"—imply young children, *infants;* for without the *infants,* what becomes of the family, of the house, of the nation? And so in the instances of Cornelius, the jailer, Lydia, Stephanus, Crispus, Onesiphorus, Aristobulus, and Narcissus, with many believers who formed the Church of Corinth, and the families of the bishop, the deacon, and the young women, referred to in the Epistle to Timothy, it is incredible to suppose children, *infants,* are not included.

3. *Oikia* includes more than the *family,* as it sometimes includes the slaves, servants, or attendants of the family. "Be not as a lion in thy *house, oikia,* nor frantic among thy servants."[6] "As the sun rising in heaven, is a good wife to her household"[7]—*oikias.* "All the saints salute you, especially those who are of Cæsar's household"[8]—*oikias.* But not one of Cæsar's family was at this time converted to Christianity, while some of his household servants, attendants, or courtiers were, as we are informed in the Scriptures: here *oikia* is used, and does not include children.

4. There cannot be better authority than Aristotle on this subject, who, writing on the polity of cities, thus defines a house: "A house is a society or companionship connected together according to the course of nature, for long continuance." Such a society is called by Charondas, "those who eat from the same cupboard," or pantry; but it is called by Epimenides, "those who sit around the same fireside;" or, as Du Val, the editor of Aristotle, sup-

[6] Eccles. iv. 30. [7] Ibid. xxvi. 16. [8] Philip. iv. 22.

poses, "those who sit around the same table" Such a society, says Aristotle, is an OIKOS or HOUSE. Aristotle also distinguishes between *oikos, house,* and *oikia, household,* just as the Scripture does. Says he, "in order to obtain a clear idea of the parts of which a city is composed, it is necessary that we should previously explain what an OIKIA is. For every city is composed of connected OIKIAS: and further, an OIKIA is composed of several parts; and these placed together in their stations, constitute the OIKIA. But a complete OIKIA comprises those who are *servants,* and those who are *free.*" Here the term *oikos, house, family,* excludes the *oikia,* household; but the term *oikia* includes the *oikos,* house. Thus, a Greek scholar meeting with the term *oikos,* in the New Testament, would understand it as follows:—"We baptized Lydia, *with her family, connected together according to the course of nature, for long continuance.* We baptized the jailer, with all those who eat from the same cupboard with himself. I baptized *those who sit around the same fireside* or *eat from the same table* with my valued friend Stephanus."

The Old Testament writers use the term *oikos,* house, in the sense as above. "Thou, O Lord God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee *a house*" —*oikos*[9]—establish thy *family.* "The Lord telleth thee, he will make thee a *house*"[10]—*oikos.* "Now let it please thee to bless the *house*—*oikos*—of thy servant—and with thy blessing let the house—*oikos,* family—of thy servant be blessed for ever."[11]

5. In proof that the term *oikos, house,* has special reference to children, *distinct from their parents.* "Then shall his brother's wife spit in his face, and say, So shall it be done unto the man who will not BUILD UP his brother's

[9] 2 Sam. vii. 27. [10] 2 Sam. vii. 11. [11] 2 Sam. vii. 29.

HOUSE"[12]—*oikos.* So in other scriptures.[13] "All the souls of the *house*—*oikos*—of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten."[14] But it is stated in the 26th verse, "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, were threescore and six." Here the former number cannot be made up without the *children* of Joseph, and hence, mathematically and strictly, the term *oikos* in this instance includes infants, as may be further proved. "Now these are the names of the children of Israel, who came into Egypt, every man, *with all his house*"[15]—*πανοικὶ, panoiki.* That the term *panoiki* includes little children is evident from Gen. xlvi. 5. "And the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their *little ones,* &c., in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him." Now the term *panoiki,* "with all his house," is the same that is used in the instance of the jailer's baptism; and as the apostles deviated not from the long-settled and popular meaning of the language in which they wrote, the term *panoiki* in the case of the jailer's baptism, as clearly includes infants as it does in the case of all Jacob's family. In the case of the baptism of Cornelius, the term employed is *σὺν παντι τῷ ὄικω*—"with all his house, feared God, and were all baptized." Yes, infants feared God—as Samuel did, when he "ministered" in the sanctuary; and as Timothy did, when he "studied the Scriptures." "The heave-offerings have I given to thee and thy sons, and to thy daughters with thee, every one that is clean in thy house"—*oikos—family.*[16] "I will raise up evil against thee [David] out of thine own house"—*oikos, family.*[17]

This meaning of the term *oikos* was adopted by the apostles, as is evident from the following references, in which the parents are explicitly distinguished from their children.

[12] Deut. xxv. 9.
[13] Gen. xvi. 2; Gen. xxx. 3, &c.
[14] Gen. xlvi. 27–31.
[15] Ex. i. 1.
[16] Num. xviii. 11.
[17] 2 Sam. xii. 11.

Lydia, and *her house, oikos;* the bishop, *and* his *house, oikos;* the deacon, *and* his *house, oikos;* the family, *oikos,* of Stephanus, separate from himself; the family, *oikos,* of Crispus, separate from himself; the family, *oikos,* of Onesiphorus, separate from himself: all of which clearly and conclusively imply that the distinction between the parents and the children was still preserved, and that special reference was had to the children.

OIKOS, HOUSE, in the Old Testament, sometimes means INFANTS explicitly. "Dathan and Abiram came out and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their *little children.* And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses"—*oikos,* that is, their "little children."[18] "The *increase* of his house—*oikos*—shall depart."[19] And so in other scriptures.[20] "Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses—*oikos*—shall be spoiled."[21] "For I know him (Abraham) that he will command his children, even his house—*oikos*—after him." "And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders said—The Lord make the woman that is come into thy house [dwelling-house] like Rachael and like Leah, which two did build the HOUSE—OIKOS—of Israel: and let thy HOUSE—OIKOS, FAMILY—be like the *house—oikos*—of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, *of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman.*"[22] If there were no other text in the Bible on this subject, the one we have just quoted were sufficient to prove that *oikos, house,* means *infants, explicitly.* Many other instances might be added, but these are sufficient to establish the sense of the term *oikos,* as it is used by the Old Testament writers. This sense the apostles

[18] Num. xvi. 27, 32. [19] Job xx. 28. [20] 1 Sam. ii. 3; Ps. lxviii. 6.
[21] Isa. xiii. 16. [22] Ruth iv. 11–12.

adopted and continued. And hence, when it is said that they baptized *houses*, we are to understand that the term house is *added*, with *special* reference to CHILDREN, INFANTS. If infants had been excluded from baptism, the term *oikos*, whose popular and fixed acceptation was known to embrace children, would have been omitted in the sacred narrative. If the apostles intended to invest this term with a sense entirely new, the bold intention should have been explicitly made known to the world. But so far from deviating from the ancient, common, and popular sense of the term, *they give it the most comprehensive meaning possible.* There is not an instance in the New Testament in which OIKOS, HOUSE, is used, but it embraces *children*, and in many places *distinct from their parents.* Thus, Paul baptized the *family—oikos*—of Stephanus, but not Stephanus himself; he salutes the *family—oikos*—of Onesiphorus, but omits Onesiphorus himself. In these instances the apostle invests the term with the greatest possible scope.

Again: it embraces children *in the youngest possible state in life.* "One [bishop] that ruleth well his own *house—oikos*—having his *children* in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own *house—oikos*—how shall he take care of the church of God."[23] Here *children* are the *house*, requiring the wise and prudent management of a father. And so with respect to the deacons: "Let the deacons be the husband of one wife, ruling their *children*, even their own *houses—oikos*—well."[24] Indeed, the term *oikos* imports *babes* and *sucklings.* "I will therefore that the young women marry, bear children, guide the house"[25]—*οἰκοδεσποτεῖν, oikodespotein*, that is, rule, guide, direct their *family, children, infants, babes*, and *sucklings.* That such, for example, was the character of Lydia's family

[23] 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5. [24] Ibid. iii. 12. [25] 1 Tim. v. 14.

is evident. It is said of Lydia, that "her heart was opened by the Lord, and that she attended to the things spoken by Paul." But nothing is said of her family until her *baptism* is referred to, when her family is now first mentioned—"and when she was *baptized, and her family*"—*oikos*. And when it is said that Crispus and his family, Cornelius and his family, the Philippian jailer and his family, and Lydia and her family, were all baptized, *no exception* is mentioned; and when, according to the popular use of the term, *oikos* is *added*, with special reference to children, the conclusion is so strengthened as to render it morally certain that *children* were included in the sacred rite.

7. But further: we have but few instances of the baptism of *families* mentioned in the Scriptures. In the church at Philippi, we have but two instances mentioned, that of Lydia, and that of the jailer. In the church at Corinth, but two, that of Crispus, and that of Stephanus: and yet besides, "MANY of the Corinthians believed, and *were baptized*"—and the inference is, that there were many *families* among these believers. On the day of Pentecost, *three thousand* believed, and were baptized: is it credible that the parents did not take their *families* with them, especially when *their* "children" were expressly referred to by Peter as embraced in the "promise?"

I quote the following remark from the author to whom I am indebted for the argument contained in this chapter. "We have this evidence on this subject—*four* Christian families recorded as *baptized*—that of Cornelius, of Lydia, of the jailer, and of Stephanus." Including the *four* families of Crispus, Onesiphorus, Aristobulus, and Narcissus—he continues: "Have we eight instances of the administration of the Lord's supper? Not half the number. Have we eight instances of the change of the Christian Sabbath from the Jewish? Not perhaps one-fourth of the number.

Yet those services are vindicated by the practice of the apostles as recorded in the New Testament. How then can we deny their practice on the subject of infant baptism, when it is established by a series of more numerous instances than can possibly be found in support of any doctrine, principle, or practice derived from the example of the apostles? Is there any other case besides that of baptism, on which we would take families at hazard, and deny the existence of young children in them? Take eight families at a venture in a street, or eight pews containing families in a place of worship, and they will afford more than one young child. Take eight families on a fair average: suppose half to consist of *four* children, and half of *eight* children: the average is *six:* calculate the chances, that in forty-eight children, not one should be an infant: *it is hundreds of thousands to one.* But there is no occasion that absolute infancy should be the object: suppose children of two or three years old; the chances would be *millions to one,* that none such were found among forty-eight children, composing six families. Or supposing baptism were completely out of sight—how many young children would be found, on the average, in *eight* families, each containing six children? What proportion do these eight families, identified and named in the New Testament, bear to those of Christians also identified and named? The number of names of persons converted after the resurrection of Christ, in the Acts of the Apostles, is *twenty-eight.* Four baptized families give the proportion of *one* in *seven.* The number of names of similar converts in the whole of the New Testament is *fifty-five.* How many converts may be fairly inferred from the history of the Acts of the Apostles? *ten thousand.* This gives ONE THOUSAND BAPTIZED FAMILIES. How many from the whole of the New Testament?—*one hundred thousand?*—this gives TEN THOUSAND BAPTIZED FAMILIES. How many

must be allowed during the first century, and down to the days of Origen? one million?—it gives ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND BAPTIZED FAMILIES: *ten millions?* the proportion is ONE MILLION BAPTIZED FAMILIES. This calculation, or one to the same effect, can neither be evaded or confuted."[26]

We are surprised when Baptist authors affirm that but three instances of what they call *household baptism* occurred in the days of the apostles. Four families are expressly mentioned as having been baptized, and four by inference, while "many" others are likewise implied. We will consider a moment the methods by which the Baptists attempt to disprove that there were children in the families of Lydia, Stephanus, and the jailer.

They assert that all the jailer's family must have been adults because they "rejoiced in God." Yes, just as the "BABES and SUCKLINGS" did in the temple, when they cried, "*Hosanna to the Son of David.*" But, continues the objection, "the apostles spake the word of the Lord unto him, and to all that were in his house," and it is concluded, that little children were too young to comprehend the word of the Lord. But this phrase, "all in his house," may refer to *others* who had been aroused by the earthquake, and the alarm of the jailer, and had assembled with him in his own apartment, where they were addressed by the apostles, as any minister of the gospel would do now under such exciting circumstances. Besides, the Greek term is *oikia*, *household*, which includes the jailer's servants, who were old enough to understand the word spoken by the apostles. But when his *baptism* is mentioned, all his *oikos*, *family*, (ver. 31,) are straightway included.

But again, it is objected, "all the members of the jailer's

[26] Apostolic Baptism, pp. 55–57.

house *believed,* because it is said, he "rejoiced, *believing* in God with all his house." But this is refuted at once by reference to the original word—πεπιστευκὼς, *pepisteukos*—which is in the singular number, and refers alone to the jailer. Now I ask, is there any proof derived from a candid consideration of the jailer's case, to justify the unscrupulous and uncompromising opposition of the Baptists to infant baptism. There is not one particle of proof found in this instance against infant baptism—not even the *remotest inference,* much less explicit prohibition. And shall the rights of infants, that had been acknowledged under the same covenant of grace from the beginning, be invalidated and absolutely set aside by a mere *surmise,* which has finally assumed the force of a *dogma,* totally destitute of even fair inference to support it? The *name* and *acts* of the head of the family only are mentioned, and the baptism of his family follows incidentally, as a matter depending upon the head of the family. The Baptists assert that the family of Lydia were adults, because it is said, the apostles "went out of prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them."[27] The "brethren" are supposed to be the sons of Lydia. But, in the first place, it is wholly gratuitous to assume that the family of Lydia comprised sons: not one word is said whether the family of Lydia was composed of sons or daughters. And in the second place, these "brethren," whom Paul and Silas "comforted," were the "Christians of Philippi," and not Lydia's family, as the Scripture history most clearly demonstrates. The whole case is a *public* transaction. Paul and Silas expel a Pythonic spirit from a certain damsel; her "masters" prevail upon the "magistrates" to imprison Paul and Silas. In the mean while, at midnight, the jailer is

[27] Acts xvi. 40.

converted, and the next day the apostles are *publicly* released from prison—and now what follows? Why, the apostles go straightway to the house of Lydia, where the Christians of Philippi had assembled, under the exciting circumstances, whom the apostles "comfort," and then they "depart." No, say others, those "brethren were her *servants*, employed in preparing the purple dye which she sold; and her house contained only *brethren*, probably menservants, whom Paul comforted." In the first place, the term used is *oikos*, *family*, and not *oikia*, *household*, which terms are never used interchangeably by the sacred writers, and therefore, the servants are not included or referred to in the term *family*. In the second place, from the whole narrative we learn, that Timothy and Luke were with Paul and Silas at the house of Lydia when they were taken by the "magistrates," and imprisoned.[28] Paul would have Timothy "to go forth with him," so here Timothy is with Paul and Silas at the house of Lydia: "And it came to pass as WE went to prayer," (ver. 16,)—who? The brethren above, and Luke—the writer of Lydia's conversion and baptism and the circumstances following. These were among the "brethren," and probably were included among those whom Paul and Silas found and "comforted," on their release from prison. Thirdly, it is not stated that one of Lydia's *servants* was baptized.[29] Indeed, *not a passage of Scripture*, in my judg-

[28] Acts xvi. 3.

[29] "It is however conjectured, first, that she had come on a trading voyage, from Thyatira to Philippi, to sell purple; as if a woman of Thyatira might not be settled in business at Philippi as a seller of this article. Then, as if to mark more strikingly the hopelessness of the attempt to torture this passage to favor an opinion, "her house" is made to consist of journeymen dyers, "employed in preparing the purple she sold;" which, however, is a notion at variance with the former; for if she was on a mere trading voyage, she most probably brought her goods ready dyed, and would have no need of a dying establishment. To

ment at least, *can be produced*, in which OIKIA, HOUSEHOLD, *is connected with baptism*. The Syriac, the very best of all versions, and which was made in the *first* century, reads, "And when she (Lydia) was baptized WITH HER CHILDREN," &c. The Coptic version has the same reading. Of the Syriac version, Dr. A. Clarke observes, it "is very valuable and of great authority." Of the Coptic version he says, "it is supposed to have been made in the *fifth* century."

To close this chapter:—*At least* FOUR HUNDRED *instances might be adduced from sacred and profane writers, in which* OIKOS, *family, includes children of* ALL AGES. The editor of Calmet adduces at least *fifty* examples in proof that *οἶκος, house*—when applied to persons, denotes a *family of children*, including *children of* ALL AGES, and says, that *three hundred* instances have been examined, and prove the same thing in a most satisfactory manner. Ed. of Cal. p. 155. The Jews were accustomed to receive the *families* of proselytes by baptism into the Jewish church, and hence would expect to see their children admitted by baptism into the Christian church, upon the abolition of circumcision. Gentile *families* entered the Jewish church by circumcision, sacrifice, and baptism; and therefore Gentile families, on the abolition of circumcision and sacrifice, would expect to take their children with them into the Christian church by baptism. And the nice and invariable distinction preserved by the apostles between the meaning of *oikos, family*, and *oikia, household*, confirms the conclusions of this chapter.

complete the whole, these journeyman dyers, although not a word is said about their conversion, nor even of their existence, in the whole story, are raised into the "brethren (a term which manifestly denotes the members of the Philippian church) whom Paul and Silas are said to have seen and comforted in the house of Lydia, before their departure." Watson's Theo. Inst. vol. i. 641, 642.

CHAPTER VI.

SILENCE OF SCRIPTURE, ETC.

EVEN granting that infant baptism is not a subject of positive institution—which we do not—then there are evidences as strong as a positive enactment in its favor. For upon the laws of mind, a conviction of the truth from collateral, circumstantial evidence, may be equivalent to a demonstration from positive evidence. But, it is to be observed, that no array or amount of circumstances in themselves false, or even plausible, can sustain that which does not exist or support error as truth. And when, in order to establish a position, as in the case of infant baptism, both positive and circumstantial evidence is produced, conviction of its truth is satisfactory in the highest degree. Having presented the first department of evidence, the positive and direct, we now invite attention to the circumstantial proofs in favor of infant baptism.

1. The silence of the Scriptures.

As the church and covenant remain the same under all dispensations, infants are entitled to church membership under all dispensations—*unless some positive repeal, or modifying innovation respecting them, be expressly declared by God.*

In the Old Testament, the system of Christianity was *instituted,* and in the New Testament, it is *established:* instituted in view of the coming of Christ, and established by his death. Originally, a positive enactment entitled infants to a participation in the provisions of the covenant, and

membership in the church, and this enactment secured these privileges in all previous dispensations: hence some divine repeal of old privileges and rights must be made by God, before they can be excluded from membership in the church under the Christian dispensation.

The introduction of infants by God himself into the church is *undoubted:* the identity of the covenant of mercy, under all dispensations, is also *undoubted:* the consequent identity of the church under every dispensation, is likewise *undoubted:* the admission of infants into the church of God for *two thousand years,* is also *undoubted:* now point me to the *time,* the *manner,* and the *declaration,* when the *covenant* was changed, when the *church* was altered, and when *children were excluded,* and I must surrender their right to church membership, under the Christian dispensation. Can it be done? It cannot: and as it cannot be done, the supposed *silence* of the New Testament is *confirmatory* of the rights of infants to baptism.

Any right takes date from the most recent enactment. Grant—which we do not—that none has been explicitly made respecting children since the original organization of the church under the Old Testament; even then the original enactment respecting the right of children to church membership remains in full force under the Christian dispensation, and must continue so till repealed by the authority of God. This is the only way to arrive at the mind of God, respecting any thing on which he has spoken with legislative authority. And yet it is argued, that the silence of the New Testament on this subject is a sufficient repeal. That is, that God's silence repeals what he has *spoken*—what he has explicitly and expressly enacted, and never explicitly and expressly repealed. On what principle can God's silence be so interpreted, when his plain *words* are sometimes so hard to be properly understood? Nothing is clearer in

the range of reason, than that the silence of God, on any subject on which he *has spoken*, and *expressly commanded*, implies still, with the force of positive *repetition*, the *continuation* of what has been positively instituted and commanded. And therefore, the obligation to acknowledge the right of children to church membership under the Christian dispensation is as strong, and sacredly binding, as when God originally instituted and commanded it under the old dispensations, or as it would be, had he originally done so in the days of Christ. No man can alter or repeal what God has not seen proper to change; and hence the silence of the New Testament on this subject would be an impressive and divine confirmation of the rights of infants to church membership, and consequent authority for the administration of infant baptism. In other words: an institution *once* made by God must be considered in full force till repealed by him: such was the right of infants to church membership, under all former dispensations: this right must be repealed by the authority that originated it, before infants can be excluded from church membership, under any subsequent dispensation: this right has not been repealed by God: therefore it must remain in as full force as when originally instituted. The last law must prevail till repealed; and in the case of infants, "the promise," or covenant of grace, founded upon the vicarious death of Christ, is the law by which infants are entitled to baptism, the seal of the covenant. The Adamic law of works was in force till set aside by the law of grace. To repeal the law of grace is to destroy the hopes of the world. And thus, upon the hypothesis of the Baptists, the silence of the Scriptures implies the *positive* and *obligatory continuation* of the rights of infants to church membership, and consequently to baptism.

The whole Bible, embracing both the Old and the New Testaments, comprehends the will of God in Christ Jesus,

and contains an account of the final and complete constitution of his church. The Old Testament explicitly mentions children as designated by God himself as members of his church; and the New Testament contains no repeal of this right. Therefore children cannot be excluded from baptism, which is the initiating ordinance of the Christian church, *without repealing the Old Testament*, and thus mutilating the original constitution of the church of God, and violating his will revealed in the beginning. Such is the bold measure of the Baptists—assault is made in fact by them upon the completeness and perfection of the Bible, and the unity of the church in all ages.

It is replied by Mr. Jewett,[1] "Can silence establish a positive institution? or a blank give us specific and definite instructions?" We answer, yes; if the silence of Scripture be on a subject previously and definitely adjusted: silence "establishes" that subject. But we inquire with more propriety, "Can silence *repeal* a *positive* institution, or a blank reverse *specific* and *definite* instructions" on any subject already explained, enjoined, and confirmed upon principles complete and immutable—principles always of the same import, and recognising the same rights—principles which, in the nature of things, compose the foundation of the church of God? If not, then the silence of the Scriptures—admitting that they are silent, which we do not—"establishes" all the ancient religious privileges of children, connected with the original divine constitution of the church, and perpetuated through all succeeding ages of time. The silence of Scripture is not only to be ascribed to the continued force of the unrepealed and unaltered constitution, but to the commonness of the thing, as in the history of the Old Testament church. According to Dr. Wall, "there is

[1] Jewett on Baptism, 3d ed. p. 91.

sometimes five hundred years together without the mention of any child circumcised," which cannot be rationally considered as proof that none were circumcised during that time.

2. The silence of the *church* supports the title of infants to baptism. A change which excluded children from the privileges of the church, would have caused a violent and universal complaint among Jewish parents and the friends of the Jewish religion. Suppose the constitution of the United States, which embraces every interest of national liberty, should be so modified, in any of its principles or doctrines, as to exclude or even omit the rights of children, what would be the opposition of parents in the land, and the triumph of enemies throughout the world? A remonstrance would go up like thunder to Congress from the whole length and breadth of the land, and the condemnation of the whole civilized world would rest upon us. A civil and destructive war doubtless would ensue. To say the least, it is inconceivable how such an innovation could be permitted in silence. In like manner, suppose the Jews, on the manifestation of Christ, with all the convincing and satisfactory proofs of his Messiahship before them, had not rejected him, but received him as their promised Deliverer, as some of them did, with what feelings think you, would they have received baptism, and entered the Christian church, *without their children?* With a mournful consciousness of the superiority of the Jewish church over the Christian in this respect, doubtless they would have so expressed their paternal regrets as to make their hostility to the innovation a matter of history, to be transmitted to succeeding times for the information of the church. And as the Jews rejected Christianity, had infants been excluded from the Christian church, they would have mentioned this *repeal act* as a strong apology for their rejection of Christianity and preference for their ancient dispensation of the covenant.

3. The silence of the *enemies* of the church is an additional proof that the right of infants to church membership was never repealed. Had it been repealed, the enemies of the new religion would have urged the exclusion of infants as a proof of the inferiority of the Christian church to the Jewish. Especially would Josephus, the most celebrated historian of the Jews, have noticed this neglect or omission of the rights of children, and some pages of his works would have been crowded with arguments founded upon this ground, to prove the superiority of the Jewish church, and the imperfection of the Christian religion. Had such a testimony been left by Josephus, be assured, the opposers of infant baptism would long since have republished it a thousand times to the world. Why this universal and profound silence of Jewish historians and writers, of the whole infidel world, and of all the enemies of the Christian church? Why the silence of Celsus, Julian, Porphyry, and others among the avowed and uncompromising enemies of Christianity in its infancy? The supposed silence of the Supreme Legislator, the silence of his church, and the silence of the enemies of Christianity, all go to prove, in the most forcible manner, that the original institution of the right of children to church membership *has never been repealed*, and therefore their right to initiation into the church, under the Christian dispensation, should be formally recognised by baptism, the initiating sacrament of the Christian dispensation. In view of the original institution—to go no further for proof—we see no necessity for *specific* texts and *positive* enactments to perpetuate the religious privileges of infants under the evangelical dispensation. All we might expect to find in the New Testament, respecting such privileges, is a *recognition* of them, expressed or implied, direct or incidental, positive or inferential; and this has already been considered

CHAPTER VII.

COLLATERAL PROOFS OF INFANT BAPTISM CONTINUED.

1. If infants were not baptized in the days of the apostles, upon the opening of the Christian dispensation, what was done with the children of Christians? Were they circumcised? By no means—circumcision was abolished by the death of Christ. Were they baptized? You say not. Then they were judged unworthy of the religious privileges of *both* dispensations, and like the surrounding heathen, they were excluded from formal association with the church under both dispensations. And thus the children were subjected to a worse condition than if the parents had never been Christians, or the Christian dispensation had never been introduced.

2. It is worthy of observation, that not a single case is mentioned in Scripture, in which the *descendants of Christian parents* were baptized in *adult* years. The Baptists take great advantage of those who pay but little attention to the circumstances of the commencement of Christianity, by stating the examples of *adult* baptism mentioned in Scripture. All these examples were of nations newly converted to Christianity, and consequently they must have *preceded* the baptism of infants, as in the case of Lydia and the jailer: but this fact the Baptists omit altogether, as well as that the *families* of these very persons were baptized also. But no instance is mentioned in Scripture of the baptism of the descendants of Christians in *adult* age. Some *thirty* years intervened between the ascension of Christ, and the

arrival of Paul at Rome, and more than *sixty* years elapsed after the introduction of Christianity before the history of the New Testament closed. During these periods, we hear of not one descendant of Christian families baptized by the apostles, which is inferential testimony that they were baptized in infancy. For of all instances of baptism, it does seem that the baptism of adult believers, descended from Christian parentage, should be mentioned, especially if baptism be indispensable as to a *peculiar mode*, or positively instituted as a *condition* of salvation, or as absolutely invalid in infancy. During these periods, two or three generations arrived at maturity, and yet of the thousands of children born of believing parents, we have not on record an account of a single case baptized in adult age. It may be replied, and so we have no account of a single case of the baptism of children of believing parents. The explanation of this is easy. The principal object of the New Testament history in referring to baptism in any specific case, is to narrate the progress of the gospel among Jews and Gentiles, and not to specify the baptism of children whose parents were already in the church. Accordingly, all the cases of baptism recorded as above, are those of converts to Christianity. In the case of parents already in the apostolic church, the baptism of their children followed as a matter so well known, that it did not require express record, and hence we find no account of any such case registered at the time. Thus, it may be inferred, that the descendants of believing parents were all baptized in infancy, and none remained to be baptized in manhood, and so no record of the kind is to be found. And therefore, from this silence of Scripture concerning the baptism of adult believers, descended from Christian parents, we argue these several things:—

First. That the *mode of* baptism is non-essential.

Secondly. That the *conditionality* of baptism is unscriptura.

Thirdly. That infant baptism *is* valid; and,

Fourthly. That, as in the case of these adult believers descended from Christian parents, baptism was not repeated, so in the present day, it ought not to be repeated in any case properly baptized in infancy. The example of ancient believers ought to be sufficient to reconcile any, in all subsequent ages, to baptism administered in infancy, and fully satisfy the most scrupulous with regard to it.

3. The history of the Christian church, from the apostolic age, irresistibly sustains the divine authority and validity of infant baptism.

We are to regard the early Fathers as CREDIBLE WITNESSES. They had their senses, their memories, oral traditions, and written documents, and hence they were qualified to bear ample testimony concerning the *facts* of the preceding age, and what occurred before their eyes. They bear testimony to the canonical authority of the different books of the New Testament, and we implictly receive them as the genuine writings of the apostles, as the inspiration of God, and commit the salvation of our souls to their light. But these Fathers were *better qualified* to bear testimony to the *public and universal* practice of infant baptism, since it was a subject daily presented to their immediate observation. We are not in search of their *opinions*, but their testimony to the *fact* of infant baptism. Tertullian had *opinions* of infant baptism different from the rest of the Fathers, it is true, but he bore testimony, nevertheless, in common with the rest of the Fathers, in favor of the *fact* of infant baptism. And observe, whenever they mention the subject of infant baptism, they do it, not to discuss, or even question its validity and authority, but they introduce it *incidentally*, to sustain and illustrate other questions at issue at the time —its DIVINE AUTHORITY *is always taken for granted*—and

never is it asserted to be the invention of man or the institution of councils.

First, JUSTIN MARTYR. In his first apology to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, he says, "Several persons among us, of sixty and seventy years old, of both sexes, who were made disciples—ἐμαθήτευθησαν, *ematheteuthesan*—to Christ, in or from their childhood, do continue uncorrupted." Justin wrote but *ninety* years after St. Matthew, who, as is supposed by Jones, Wetstein, Dr. Owen, and Richard Watson, wrote his Gospel for the use of the Hebrew believers, in their own tongue, about *five* years after the ascension of Christ, that is, A. D. 41. Consequently, they who were seventy years old in the time of Justin, must have been made disciples to Christ in their *childhood*, in the midst of the apostles' times, within *twenty-five* years after the ascension of Christ, *twenty* years after St. Matthew wrote, *in the very year* in which St. Mark wrote, *three* years before St. Luke wrote, and *forty* years *before* the death of St. John. And as there was no other way of making disciples to Christ from infancy but by baptism, these persons must have been baptized in their infancy, *during the very days of the apostles, and probably by the apostles themselves*, at least with their approval, which is the same thing. This testimony is conclusive.

Secondly, IRENÆUS. He was born A. D. 97, *three years* before the death of St. John; was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John; lived between thirty and forty years after Justin Martyr, and between sixty and seventy years after the apostles. He says: "*The church learned* FROM THE APOSTLES *to baptize* CHILDREN." And in his book against heretics he writes: "He (Jesus Christ) came to save all persons by himself, all I say, who are *regenerated* by him unto God, INFANTS and LITTLE ONES and CHILDREN, and young men and old men." It is to be observed, that this writer is very remarkable for the common use of the

term *regeneration* for *baptism*—what else could he mean in the case of "infants, little ones, and children?" And thus by substituting baptism for regeneration, we find his testimony as strong as that of Justin in favor of the apostolic authority of infant baptism.

Thirdly, TERTULLIAN. He was born about forty-five years after the apostles' days, and wrote on the subject of baptism *late* in the *second* century, within a hundred and fifty years after the churches were planted by the apostles. He had what might be called, at that time, singular views of baptism, which led him to think its delay "more useful," in the case of infants and certain adults. But he speaks of the baptism of children as the *common practice,* and never writes one word against its lawfulness, nor even expresses a *doubt* of its apostolic origin. Hear him: "Give to them who *ask* thee, but *children* cannot ask; do not forbid them to *come:* therefore let them stay till they can *come:* let them come when they are grown up—when they understand —when they are instructed whither it is they are about to come: let them be made Christians when they can know Christ."

In the first place, this quotation from Tertullian is positive proof that infant baptism existed at the time as the practice of the church, or why should Tertullian have written against it in *this* manner? And so Tertullian himself is a witness to the *fact* that infant baptism existed at this early age of the church. Secondly, "Do not forbid them to *come:*" if Tertullian refers to the language of Christ, it does not imply that children ought not to be "*brought*" to Christ; for Christ himself *rebuked* his disciples, who, like Tertullian, thought they were *too young* to receive his blessing, and commanded that, though they could not "*come*" themselves, they should be "brought" to him. If Tertullian employ this passage of Scripture against infant baptism, or

as in any way referring to it, then the question is settled at once by Christ against Tertullian, for he says, "Suffer *little* children to come unto me, and *forbid them not*,"—and he "took them up in his arms, and blessed them," though they could neither "*ask*," nor "*come*," nor "*understand*" Christ. Thirdly, I repeat, we are to distinguish between the testimony of the Fathers to *facts*, and their *opinions* respecting *facts*. Their testimony we are bound to receive; their opinions we can reject or receive according as we have good ground to believe them true or false. Tertullian maintained that baptism washed away all *previous sin*, whether *actual* or *original*, and hence the longer baptism was delayed, the better it would be, in his opinion, for the subject, unless there was *immediate danger of death*, since all sins, committed *after* baptism, could not be washed away by it: and thus he included all *unmarried persons* of both sexes, *virgins* and *widows*, in the prohibition with infants, except, as above, those cases in danger of death. Entertaining such views, no wonder he should consider the delay of baptism in the case of infants desirable, and should attempt to support it from the Scriptures.[1]

But the force of this objection to infant baptism is destroyed by the following considerations:—On the same ground, *no one* should be baptized till he come to die. Besides, the objection is founded upon an erroneous view of the nature and design of baptism. Baptism is not the condition of forgiveness of sins, "actual and original," but

[1] Such was the influence of Tertullian, that we need not be surprised to find, for more than a century after his age, many distinguished converts, and among them Constantine, postponing their baptism till a late period in life. But this fact is to be ascribed to the erroneous views entertained of *baptism* by all such persons, and not to any difference of opinion that existed at this time with regard to the apostolic origin and prevalence of infant baptism.

imposes upon the subject the solemn obligation to refrain from sinning through all *future* life. Fourthly, if the advice of Tertullian to delay infant baptism, proves that infants were not baptized in his age, and hence should not be baptized in any age, then his advice to delay the baptism of unmarried persons and widows, also proves that such persons were not baptized in his age, and consequently should not be baptized in any age of the church! For the same reason, in all ages, baptism ought to be denied to adults, since all Christians are liable to *temptation*. Fifthly, why did he not terminate the controversy at once, by boldly stating and proving that infant baptism was a *novelty*, an invention of man, *unknown to* and *unauthorized by* the apostles? This would have been conclusive. He might have appealed to the *old men* of his time, whose memories reached within twenty or thirty years of the apostolic age, and who might have furnished him with the requisite information, had it been introduced within the time of their remembrance. He had before him, also, written histories of the times, to which he might have referred for proof. But he makes no appeal, not even the remotest allusion, to any testimony on the subject. Sixthly, that all doubt may be removed on the subject, take the *positive testimony* of Origen, contemporary with Tertullian, who proves incontestably that infant baptism was the ESTABLISHED USAGE *of the church in the* DAYS OF TERTULLIAN HIMSELF, AND THAT IT HAD BEEN HANDED DOWN FROM THE APOSTLES. To the testimony of Origen we shall soon direct attention, but before we do, let the reader bear in mind that "these two writers lived in different parts of the world; that Tertullian wrote the earlier of the two, and being born of heathen parents, was converted to Christ in adult age, while Origen enjoyed the privilege of descending from Christian parents, and of being taught the Christian doctrine from childhood."

The boldness of Tertullian at this early period of Christianity, it may be observed, is explicable on the ground that he was subjected, to a great extent, to the "bondage" of the ancient law, and consequently was unqualified to advocate the freeness and fulness of the gospel of Christ. The opposition of Tertullian rested upon a principle[2] altogether different from the ground of opposition urged by modern Baptists, for he allowed the baptism of infants whose lives are in danger. And this modified opposition proves that infant baptism was the practice of the church at the time; for why does he wish it DEFERRED, *unless it had been the* PREVIOUS PRACTICE?

Fourthly, ORIGEN. He was the most learned of the Fathers. He was born between eighty and ninety years after St. John's death, was contemporary with Tertullian, was baptized in infancy, and was descended from Christian parents—his father was a Christian martyr, his grandfather and grandmother, and great-grandfather also, were Christians; and consequently, he could not be ignorant of the primitive rites and customs of the apostolic churches. For the purpose of acquiring information of our Lord and his doctrine, and the constitution, manners, and customs, of the primitive churches, he visited the churches planted by the apostles in Cappadocia, in Arabia, in Greece, and in Rome; while the most of his life was spent in Syria, and in Palestine—the very countries in which the first churches were planted by the apostles: consequently, he must have been well acquainted with the rites and customs of the apostolic churches. And the conclusion of all his researches is: "*The church received from* THE APOSTLES *the injunction or tradition* TO GIVE BAPTISM EVEN TO INFANTS. According

[2] This error of Tertullian, Calvin calls "a preposterous caution;" and says, "it is frequently censured in the writings of the ancient bishops," Institutes, b. 4, c. 15, sec. 3.

to the saying of our Lord concerning infants—*and thou wast an infant when thou wast baptized*—'their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.'" This is his testimony to infant baptism—and that its credibility may be established, consider more fully his own genealogy, and that of certain "faithful men" to whom Timothy gave charge, at *forty years* only. As Origen's father was martyred, he is to be estimated at *twenty-five* years only, and thus it will appear that the testimony of Paul, Timothy, and Timothy's "faithful men," and of "others" also instructed by them, extends to the year 180. Now Origen was born in the year 185. Subtract from this, twenty-five years for his father; forty years for his grandfather; and forty years also for his great-grandfather, and we are brought to the year 80—a period within twelve years of the death of Mark the Evangelist, which occurred at Alexandria "from the wounds his enemies inflicted as they were repeating their torments after a night of imprisonment." Mark knew perfectly well the practices of the apostles, for he had been "sent by Peter to advance the cause of Christ in Egypt," and during his life, he would select his "faithful men" to transmit at his death instructions of apostolic authority. John survived precisely *twenty* years, that is, he died A. D. 100. Thus, there was Timothy, or Titus, or some of their "faithful men" contemporaneous with the Origen family for nearly a *hundred years.* Now how was it possible that the practice of the primitive church at this early age could be forgotten, or corrupted, or perverted, or abused, or counteracted, or compromitted by the ingenuity of man, or the stratagem of hell? Is it at all credible, that rites and ceremonies absolutely new, and diametrically opposed to apostolic injunctions, could be so soon superadded to apostolic practices and customs, and be so quietly established and insensibly identified with them, that not one word of opposition

should be heard from any quarter? Where was Timothy, or some one of his "FAITHFUL MEN?" And where was ORIGEN? And what does he say of the Christian observances in his own family, in his father's, in his grandfather's, and his great-grandfather's, as derived immediately from Mark the Evangelist? He says, "*The church received* FROM THE APOSTLES THE INJUNCTION OR TRADITION TO GIVE BAPTISM EVEN TO INFANTS." Now why did not some anti-pædobaptist—if any existed at the time—speak out, and say, Origen, you are of Christian descent—you have travelled much in countries where the primitive churches were planted—and YOU KNOW that infant baptism is not of apostolic origin—you know you were baptized in adult age—you *know* you were baptized by immersion? These bold addresses would have silenced Origen effectually, had not infant baptism been of apostolic origin. But not one word of appeal of this kind—not one: on the contrary, no one, not even Tertullian himself, expresses a doubt of the apostolic origin and authority of infant baptism, and speaks of it as the COMMON PRACTICE. Such testimony, without opposition from Tertullian, or any one else, we regard as sufficient to establish firmly and satisfactorily our belief in any fact of history supposed to have occurred one hundred years before.[3] Origen not only attests to the *validity*, but the *obligation* of infant baptism: "*The church received from the apostles the injunction to give baptism to infants.*"

[3] "Nor can this testimony of Origen be regarded as an interpolation made by his translators. If there were found in these translations of Origen but one or two places, and those in Rufinus alone, that did speak of infant baptism, there might have been suspicions of their being interpolations. But when there are so many of them, brought in on several occasions, in *translations made by several men, who were of several parties, and enemies to one another*, (as St. Hierome and Rufinus were,) and upon no tentation, (for it is certain that in their time there was no dispute about infant baptism,) that they should be all without any reason

Fifthly. CYPRIAN. He was contemporary with Origen, and a member of the council of *sixty-six* bishops held at Carthage 150 years from the age of the apostles. In answer to a question proposed by *Fidus*, a country pastor, whether it would not be better to delay the baptism of infants till the eighth day after their birth, than to baptize them before that time, the council addressed to him the following letter:

"Cyprian, and others of the college of bishops who were present, sixty-six in number, to Fidus our brother, greeting:

"We read your letter, most dear brother, &c.

"So far as it pertains to the case of INFANTS, whom you think ought not to be baptized within the second or third day from their birth; and that the ancient law of circumcision should be observed, so that none should be baptized and sanctified before the eighth day after birth: it seemed TO ALL IN OUR COUNCIL FAR OTHERWISE. For as to what you proposed to be done, there was *not* ONE of your opinion. But on the contrary, it was our UNANIMOUS DECISION that the grace and mercy of God should not be denied to any as soon as born."[4] This ecclesiastical decision is more important than the judgment or opinion of a single private Father: *the decision of the general council determines the common practice of the whole church.* The question before the council was not respecting the *lawfulness* of infant baptism—that was admitted—but concerning *the time* of administering it —and the time is determined without a dissenting voice.

Sixthly. AMBROSE, AUGUSTINE, CHRYSOSTOM, JEROME,

forged, is absurd to think." Wall, vol. i. 119, 120. And Wall adds, "these translators lived not much more than *one hundred* years after Origen's time; and the Christians then must know whether infants had been used to be baptized in Origen's time or not: the very tradition from father to son must have carried a memory of it for so short a time. And then, for them to make Origen speak of a thing which all the world knew was not in use in his time, *must have made them ridiculous.*"

[4] Cyprian, Epist., 66.

OPTATUS, GREGORY NAZIANZEN. These Fathers and writers wrote in the *fourth* century.

Ambrose: "*The baptism of infants had been the practice of the apostles and of the church till his time.*"

Augustine: He mentions the baptism of infants as that which "*the whole church practises.*" "*It was not instituted by any council, but was always in use.*" He adds: "He does not remember ever to have heard of any, whether *catholic* or *heretic,* who maintained that baptism ought to be denied to infants—this the church has always maintained."[5]

Chrysostom: In the latter part of the fourth, or the beginning of the fifth century, he says: "*The catholic church everywhere declared that infants should be baptized.*"

Jerome: Incidentally referring to the subject of infant baptism, he thus bears testimony: "Unless you suppose the children of Christians if they do not receive baptism are themselves accountable *for the sin,* and the *wickedness* not imputed to those who would not give it to them." Here he declares that infant baptism was the practice of the church in his time, and that it is *the sin of the parents to neglect it.*

Optatus: He was bishop of Milevium, and also refers to infant baptism *incidentally,* as the universal practice of the church. Referring to baptism, he exclaims, "*Oh what a garment is this, that is always one and innumerable, that decently fits* ALL AGES, *and all shapes! It is neither too big for* INFANTS, *nor too little for men, and without any alteration fits women.*"

Gregory Nazianzen: He was a celebrated theological and polemical writer of the fourth century—he thus writes:

[5] Augustine had 300 years to look back to apostolic times, and had before him writings and records which are now lost to us: but a small proportion of early evidence of apostolic practices has survived the ruins of time, and remains upon the pages of secular and ecclesiastical history in the possession of the church.

"*Have you an infant? Let not wickedness have the advantage of him: from his* INFANCY *let him be sanctified; from the cradle let him be consecrated by the Spirit. You fear the seal on account of the weakness of nature: how faint-hearted a mother, and how little faith!* Hannah, *even before Samuel was born, promised him to God, and consecrated him immediately after his birth, and brought him up in the priestly dress, not fearing any human infirmity, but trusting in God.*" And again, he supposes the following question proposed to him respecting infant baptism, which he answers: "*What say you as concerning those who are as yet* INFANTS, *and are not sensible of its loss or of its 'grace,' shall we baptize them too? By all means, if in any danger make it requisite. For it is better that they be* SANCTIFED [baptized] *without their own sense of it, than that they should die* UNSEALED *and* UNINITIATED."

Seventhly. PELAGIUS. While Pelagius is not to be regarded as one of the Fathers, yet his testimony in favor of infant baptism is rendered most important by the circumstances under which it was given. He was a contemporary and antagonist of Augustine in the field of polemic theology. The celebrated controversy on original sin occurred about 300 years after the apostolic age, between Pelagius and Celestius on the one side, and Augustine and the whole church with him on the other. Pelagius denied the doctrine of original sin. The argument used by Augustine was *the prevailing practice of infant baptism:* "If not to shadow forth the inward washing to which the infant was entitled, *what was its design?*" This greatly embarrassed Pelagius. But why did he not set aside the argument of Augustine at once, by showing that *infant baptism* was a *human invention, a novelty?* With all his learning and subtlety, he was able to do this, had it been possible. But no effort of this kind is made On the contrary, he adopts other measures to explain and

justify the practice of infant baptism. Such as "infants had actual sins that needed forgiveness;" or, "that they had pre-existed, and baptism was for sins done in a former state;" or, "that they were initiated into a church in which *sins were forgiven:*" all of which were easily refuted. And so strong was the temptation to deny the validity of infant baptism, that some of his enemies affirmed that he denied the right of infants to baptism; whereupon Pelagius exclaimed: "*Men slander me, as if I denied the sacrament of baptism to infants.* I NEVER HEARD OF ANY ONE, EVEN THE MOST IMPIOUS HERETIC, *who asserted that infants are not to be baptized.*" The testimony of Pelagius is the stronger, when we consider that the doctrine of infant baptism furnished an unanswerable argument against his heretical opinions.[6] Besides, further testimony in favor of infant baptism, may be drawn from his creed: "We hold one baptism, which we say ought to be administered with the same sacramental words to INFANTS as it is to all elder persons."[7]

Celestius, associated with him in this great controversy, makes also the following confession: "We own that infants *ought, according to the rule of the* UNIVERSAL CHURCH, *and according to the* SENTENCE OF THE GOSPEL, to be baptized," &c.[8] That the history of the apostolic times might be trans-

[6] The doctrine of Pelagius was pronounced heretical; and thus, by the judgment of the ancient church, the right of infants to baptism was justified on the ground of original sin.

[7] Wall, vol. i. 440.

[8] Respecting these men, Wall observes, "They lived in the prime of their age at Rome, a place to which all the people of the world had then a resort. They were both some time at Carthage in Africa. Then the one settled at Jerusalem, and the other travelled through all the noted Greek and Eastern churches in Europe and Asia. It is impossible there should have been any churches that had any singular practice in this matter, but they must have heard of them. So that one may fairly conclude, that there was not at this time, nor in the memory of the men of

mitted unimpaired to the succeeding ages of the church, it was the care of the apostles "to commit to FAITHFUL MEN, *able to teach others also*," [9] this solemn and important charge. These "faithful men" were instructed by the apostles themselves. The Apostles Jude and Thomas, and the Evangelist Luke, all lived beyond the year 70 A. D. Timothy and Titus a few years longer. John died A. D. 100, or a little after. Polycarp, the friend and disciple of St. John, lived till about sixty-five years after the death of St. John. Tertullian lived *twenty-two* years before Polycarp's death; Justin Martyr lived and died before Polycarp's death; and Irenæus, the friend and disciple of Polycarp, was born *thirty* years after Polycarp was born, lived *thirty-one* years after his death, and about ninety-six after the death of St. John. Origen was born *twelve* years before the death of Irenæus, and lived sixty-one years after his death, and nine years after the council at Carthage was held. Now Origen frequently appeals to the writings of Irenæus on the subject of infant baptism, and says, "IT WAS HANDED DOWN FROM THE APOSTLES." How is it possible that the practice of infant baptism at this age, *immediately after the death of the apostles, could become universal in the church, unless it was of apostolic origin and authority?* Where were the "*faithful* men?" Who were the innovators?

To continue:—We have seen the same testimony in favor of infant baptism, transmitted from the time of Origen and Cyprian, down through Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom, Jerome, Optatus, Gregory Nazianzen, to the controversy be-

this time, any Christian society that denied baptism to infants." And Wall adds on the same page, "This cuts off at once all the pretences which some anti-pædobaptists would raise from certain probabilities, that the Novatians, or Donatists, or the British Church of those times, or any other whom Pelagius must needs know, did deny it." Vol. iv. 467.

[9] 2 Tim. ii. 2.

tween Pelagius and Augustine—and we have now arrived at the *fifth* century of the Christian era.

Not to multiply testimonies any further, take the sum of the whole matter as it is made out by Wall in his great work on infant baptism:—"*For the first four hundred years of the Christian era, there appeared only one man, Tertullian, who advised the delay of infant baptism, in some cases, and one Gregory, that did perhaps practise such delay in the case of his children; but no society of men so thinking, or so practising, nor any one man saying it was unlawful to baptize infants: and that for the next seven hundred years, there is not so much as one man to be found, that either spoke for, or practised any such delay,* BUT ALL TO THE CONTRARY."[10] The weight of these testimonies is overwhelming. Mr. Tombes, an English writer, in reply to Mr. Marshall, who had produced a great many Fathers in proof of infant baptism, observes, "It is a wonder to me, that if it were so manifest as you speak, you should find nothing in Eusebius for it, nor in Ignatius, nor in Clemens Alexandrinus, nor in Athanasius, nor in Epiphanius." Wall replies, "This objection is weak. For there is no age of the church in which one may not find many books that say nothing of that matter; because they treat of subjects on which they have no occasion to speak of that. Ignatius wrote nothing but a few letters to the neighboring churches, to exhort them to constancy in that time of persecution. Athanasius was wholly taken up about the Trinity. Clemens Alexandrinus with the heathen philosophers; (yet in him we have now found a place where he in a transient and cursory way mentions the apostles baptizing infants.) Eusebius writes the chronicles of the succession of kings, emperors, bishops, and the state of the church, either flourishing or persecuted, under each of

[10] Vol. ii. 501.

them."[11] And as to Epiphanius, it may be added, who died after the year 400, his silence is to be regarded as an argument in favor of infant baptism, since the Baptists themselves admit that infant baptism had been prevalent in the church from the latter part of the second, or beginning of the third century.

From what we have now written, the reader is prepared to see the truth of the saying of Calvin: "What they circulate among the uninformed multitude, that after the resurrection of Christ, a long series of years passed, in which infant baptism was unknown, is shamefully contrary to truth; for there is no ancient writer *who does not refer its origin as a matter of* CERTAINTY TO THE AGE OF THE APOSTLES."[12]

4. The symbols used by Christians in the first centuries prove conclusively that infant baptism was the practice of the church in those centuries.

In the earliest ages of Christianity, we find the following inscription, with the symbols of a *fish*, an *anchor*, and a *dove:*

"*A* FAITHFUL, *descended from ancestors who also were faithful, here lies Zosimus: he lived two years, one month, and twenty-five days.*"

The following, with the symbol of a *dove*, is an inscription of the same period:

"*Achillia,* NEWLY BAPTIZED, *is buried here; she died at the age of one year and five months.*"

Again:

"Sacred to the great God. *Leopardus rests here in peace with holy spirits.* HAVING RECEIVED BAPTISM, *he went to the blessed innocents.* This was placed by his parents, with whom he lived seven years and seven months."

[11] Vol. iv. 511, 512

[12] Insts. b. 4, c. 16, sec. 8.

Take other examples from ancient existing memorials:

"*Rufillo,* NEWLY BAPTZED, *who lived two years and forty days* Quintillian the father places this to the memory of his son who sleeps in the peace of Christ."

"*To Domitius,* an innocent, NEWLY BAPTIZED, *who lived three years and thirty days.*"

"Valerius Decentius the father places this to his son, NEWLY BAPTIZED, *who lived three years, ten months, and fifteen days.*"

"*To Pisentus, an innocent soul who lived one year, eight months, and thirteen days.* NEWLY BAPTIZED: *buried in the ides of September in peace.*"

"*To Leoni:* NEWLY BAPTIZED, *who lived six years, eight months, and eleven days. He reposed the sixth of the nones of July,* Philippus and Sallia being consuls," A. D. 348.

"*To Aristus, who lived eight years;* NEWLY BAPTIZED, *he went off the first of the nones of June: Timasius and Promotorus being consuls,*" A. D. 389.

"*Flavia Jovina, who lived three years and thirty-two days:* NEWLY BAPTIZED: *deposited in peace, the eleventh of the calends of October,*" A. D. 367.

These will suffice: the cemetery of the early church no doubt contains hundreds of thousands of graves not marked by a single inscription, and those that survive the ruins of centuries are comparatively very few.

5. The continued practice of infant baptism by the Christian church, from the days of the apostles to the present time, is a strong collateral proof of its apostolic origin and validity.

Advocates for exclusive immersion and opponents of infant baptism say that their views are so plainly set forth in the Scriptures, that they need no arguments to make them clearer, and hence do not trouble themselves much on the subject. Plain, indeed! Why then have they escaped the

observation of the Christian church for so long a time? Are not eighteen hundred years time enough to open the eyes of the church on the subject of baptism? Indeed, is not this period of time sufficient to *confirm* the church in its views on this subject? Without doubt, the continued, unchanged opinion of the church during all this time, is proof enough of the authenticity of the doctrine revealed, especially when it is considered, that so much talent and piety, for so long a succession of years, and through so much controversial strife, during the last few centuries, have been exercised in the investigation. I see no alternative, but that the views of the pædobaptists on this subject are ascribable to *ignorance*, or *dishonesty—or that they are scriptural and sound.* That their views on the subject of infant baptism are to be ascribed to *ignorance*, is refuted by their talent and profound erudition: that they are *dishonest*, is disproved by their piety and good works of every description; and therefore, that their views are scriptural and sound is sustained both by their talents and piety. We shall refer to this subject again, in another part of this work. These are the collateral proofs.

We now sum up the proofs adduced in support of infant baptism as a Divine institution of perpetual obligation. First, the ground of infant salvation, is the ground of infant baptism; secondly, infants have been included under all the dispensations of the covenant of grace; thirdly, the identity of the church under all the dispensations of the covenant of grace in all time; fourthly, the absence of repeal or modification of the original gracious covenant made with man respecting children; fifthly, the impossibility of fully and satisfactorily explaining many passages of Scripture but in harmony with the doctrine; sixthly, the proper discrimination between the terms *oikos* and *oikia*, and the specific reference of *oikos* to *children, little ones,* BABES *and* SUCK-

LINGS; seventhly, the history of the Christian church since the days of the apostles; eighthly, the force of the symbols of early Christianity; and ninthly, the judgment, talent, and piety of the whole Christian church in the present day—the Baptists excepted.

PART IV.

Objections to Infant Baptism Considered.

CHAPTER I.

"INFANT BAPTISM IS AN INNOVATION."

If this objection cannot be sustained by its friends, infant baptism must be received as a divine institution. Let us commence investigation at the time when it is stated this innovation was made. We shall quote the statements and admissions of Baptist authors.

Mr. Judson supposes that it "commenced in the LATTER PART *of the* SECOND century."[1] "No mention is made of infant baptism in the second century, unless it be just at its close." Chapin's letters, p. 99. "It appears that infant baptism was not practised, until about the close of the second century." Pendleton on Baptism and Communion, p. 21. "No evidence of infant baptism, before the latter end of the second, or the beginning of the third century." Baptist Library, 3 vols. in 1, p. 10. Mr. Broaddus, an elder in the Baptist church, in a letter addressed to "Slicer on Baptism," says, "Although the baptism of infants was invented *as early as the* CLOSE *of the* SECOND CENTURY," &c.[2] Mr. Gale himself admits that "the baptism of infants does not appear to have been practised till about *the* LATTER END

[1] Judson on Baptism, p. 79.

[2] Slicer on Baptism, p. 88.

of the SECOND CENTURY."[3] That is, he admits that infant baptism was practised by the church in the time Irenæus wrote, which was about the year 180—and thus, Mr. Gale himself concedes that infant baptism was the practice of the church *within eighty years of the apostolic age, for John died,* A. D. 100. Mr. Alexander Campbell also admits that infant baptism is a little more than 1500 years old. "That infant baptism," says he, "is of great antiquity, while infant sprinkling is of modern origin, we cheerfully admit. *We have no objection to admit* that infant baptism is 1500 years old, or perhaps a few years older."[4] In the first place, these admissions silence for ever the oft-repeated declaration, that "infant baptism is *a relic* of Popery," since popery did not rise till several hundred years afterward. Mr. Robert Robinson, the Baptist historian, instead of showing that infant baptism was a subject of *abuse* amid the corruptions of the Romish Church, which is a fact, ascribes the *origin* of infant baptism to those corruptions, though, according to the above admissions, *its origin dates several centuries* earlier. This inconsistency, between Mr. Robinson and more modern Baptist writers, must be palpable to the most cursory reader. In the second place, by the admissions above, we are brought within a very few years of the apostolic age; and it is incredible, that at this time, infant baptism, as a corruption, without opposition and historic evidence, could have crept into the church. And here the reader will be surprised to hear Mr. Gale himself admitting: "I will grant it is probable, that what *all* or *most* of the church *practised immediately after* the apostles' times, *had been appointed or practised by the apostles themselves; for it is hardly to be imagined* that any considerable body of these ancient Christians, *and much less that the whole,* should so

[3] Wall, vol. iv, 322. [4] Debate with McCalla, pub. 1824, p. 365.

deviate from the customs and injunctions of their venerable founders, whose authority they held so sacred. *Now opinions* or *practices are usually introduced by degrees,* AND NOT WITHOUT OPPOSITION. Therefore, in regard to baptism, a thing of such universal concern, and daily practice, I allow it to be VERY PROBABLE *that the primitive churches* KEPT TO THE APOSTOLIC PATTERN. *I verily believe that the primitive church maintained,* IN THIS CASE, AN EXACT CONFORMITY TO THE PRACTICE OF THE APOSTLES, *which, doubtless,* AGREED ENTIRELY WITH CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS."[5] Established so near the times of the apostles, in direct opposition to their authority, when such a thing was not then known or thought of in all the churches then existing! What, all Christendom carried away blindly and insensibly, at this early age, by an absurd and novel innovation! Especially too, when the church soon became divided into sects, ever watchful, and careful to prevent innovation! Political and ecclesiastical changes are never made without warm and protracted debates, and some account of the discussion and the results, if important, is always preserved. This is the fact respecting the various disputes and decisions of many councils of the church; and in like manner, had infant baptism been an innovation, it would have passed under review before the whole Christian world, and some council would have transmitted, through the records of the church, some account of the circumstances and the occasion. Consider the character of the discussions of the age. Christendom resounds with strife. The press disseminates debates, in books, pamphlets, and periodicals, to the four winds of heaven—the pulpit thunders from one end of the church to the other—the historian inscribes some account of every important innovation upon the pages of the

[5] Gale's Reflections on Wall, p. 398.

times—and succeeding ages are made acquainted with the past. But not one stroke of the pen—not one whisper—not the least intimation—no controversy—no effort to suppress the error—no decision of councils, general or provincial, against it—no variety of sects—no diversity of opinions on the subject—*not one iota of information—in all the past, from any source, respecting the time, circumstances, and place of this supposed innovation!* About 300 years after the apostolic age, the celebrated controversy, already referred to, between Augustine and Pelagius, on the doctrine of original sin, arose. The Pelagian heresy was the denial of the doctrine of original sin. To refute this heresy, Augustine inquires, "Why are children baptized for the remission of sins, if they have none?" That is, Augustine directs the mind of his antagonist to the *ordinance* and *design* of infant baptism, as a proof that children are depraved, and hence should be baptized, that their title to the purifying operations of the Holy Ghost may be set forth in the cases of all such as die in infancy. Now if infant baptism had been an innovation of man, and not a divine institution, Pelagius, with all his skill and learning, would immediately have proved the fact, and thus destroyed the force of the argument drawn from the *established practice* of infant baptism. But so far from this, Pelagius admits its apostolic origin and authority; and so embarrassed was he by its force, that he and his party resorted, as we have seen, to a variety of futile evasions to explain the *design* of infant baptism. How easy to have spared themselves all this trouble and inconsistency, by positively denying, and clearly disproving, the validity of the sacred rite in its application to infants! The learned Dr. Gill, a Baptist, affirms that infant baptism became generally prevalent in the *fourth* century. About this *very time*, the controversy between Augustine and Pelagius was carried on with great warmth on both sides—and

yet Pelagius takes no notice of a fact, if it existed, that would have given him great advantage in the discussion! Yea, more: it is affirmed that this innovation was made in the latter part of the *second* century. And how does it happen, that Pelagius, and all the Fathers, about a *hundred years* afterward, never heard of it, nor spoke of it—especially when it would have been the very information they needed to obtain a decisive victory over their antagonists?

Mr. Jewett, in his little book on baptism, says: "While from the earliest period, the baptism of believers appears on every page of history, her voice is dumb respecting infant baptism for *two hundred* years after Christ."[6] And what of that? Does this prove that infant baptism is a human invention? Not at all. In the present day, we never publish the number of infants baptized, but notice only the number of adults baptized. And yet it is a sufficient refutation of the objection of Mr. Jewett, when he admits on the very next page that *proselyte baptism* was known among the Jews A. D. 70, and of course, the baptism of children was also known, *seventy* instead of *two hundred* years after Christ.

Infant baptism—a relic of Popery, an innovation of man—made out at the close of the second century! *And where was the Baptist Church all this time?* While one is reading Mr. Robinson's long History of Baptism, he looks in vain for the history of the Baptist Church at this early period. *All Christendom*, FOR CENTURIES, he proves himself, *were baptized in infancy, and of course*, THE BAPTIST CHURCH WAS NOT IN EXISTENCE ALL THIS TIME. He adduces various authorities in proof of the prevalence of infant baptism in the early ages, *but not one* for the existence of the Baptist Church—and all his explanations of the origin of

[6] Third ed. p. 89.

infant baptism are nothing more than mere *surmises*, or the vaguest suppositions, or assertions without a particle of proof to sustain them. Whose voice is heard against it? Tertullian's? But he allowed baptism to infants about to die, and therefore *he* was *no Baptist*, but an *advocate* for infant baptism. The Baptists date the origin of their church at the time of the dispensation of John the Baptist, and run down an imaginary line of their perpetuated existence to the present time. Now tell me, if the vast multitudes baptized by John, by the disciples of Christ, with those forming the churches planted during the first *two hundred* years, constituted the Baptist Church, how can it be believed, that this innovation all at once should obtain an easy, successful, and universal sanction, without a whisper of opposition, and all at once the whole Baptist Church be converted into a pædobaptist church? The thing is incredible.

Suppose at this day, certain traitorous citizens should arise and proclaim through our nation, that the children of *slaves* are entitled to the rights of citizenship, and that the law securing them this right was not only passed and observed when the constitution was first adopted, but that it had been observed all along by the nation since the constitution was adopted; do you suppose the people at this day would acknowledge that they had lived in open violation of the fundamental law of the land up to the present time, and at once would correct their error by universally admitting the children of slaves to all the rights of citizenship? No, you would boldly call this a political revolution, and the whole land would rise up in opposition to it. The movers in the revolution would be branded as traitors, and such public measures would be adopted by the nation, as would transmit their names, covered with infamy, to all succeeding ages of the American people. Such, in the history of the church, would have been the fate of the first friends of infant bap-

tism, had it not been a *divine* institution. But there is not one word of history of this kind, as we shall presently see, for more than a thousand years after it had been acknowledged by the church.

Again:—Suppose our nation to have existed a thousand years, and all this time the right of *freeborn* children to all the blessings of freedom to have been universally acknowledged; and a set of men should arise, and proclaim that the right of freeborn children to the blessings of freedom was an innovation of the *second* century of our republic—would you not ask for the proof, the record, the legislative enactment in the matter, the circumstances, and all that was materially connected with the innovation? Would you receive bare assertions and *assumptions* as sufficient arguments—assertions and assumptions, too, as we shall presently see, that contain the elements of their own refutation? You would tell them, it is not in the constitution—not in the histories of the nation—not in the histories, nor in the constitutions, nor in the usages of the individual States. And how would you regard such a party of men? From such a party, hostile to the dearest interests of your children, would you elect a man to the office of president of the United States? or invest him with any authority over the rights of your children? And shall we, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, give the least credence to the declaration, that children have no right to association with the church, and that all now in it, of course, are to be excluded from it, and in future none are to be admitted, because infant baptism is an innovation made in the *second* century? Such a declaration requires nothing less than a *miracle* to support it.

By the admission of Mr. Alexander Campbell, we are led back fifteen hundred years on our way to the origin of infant baptism. And I confess, I was not only surprised, but highly gratified, when I saw this honest and cheerful ad-

mission from one of the strongest opposers of infant baptism the world ever saw. I take his admission as equivalent to an acknowledgment that infant baptism is a divine institution. "We have no objection to admit," says he, "that infant baptism is 1500 years old, *or perhaps a few years older.*" The only question here is, what period of time is embraced in these "few years?" *Three,* or *three hundred?* The admission does not definitely determine. Mr. Campbell did not say, for he did not know. How did he know that infant baptism was only a few years older than 1500 years, unless he knew something of the circumstances of its origin? If infant baptism be a human invention of 1500 years' antiquity, or a little more, why cannot the same mind that makes this discovery, also point out exactly the time, place, and circumstances of the invention? What was the authority of this investigator of ecclesiastical history on which he admitted the origin of infant baptism? Having no knowledge of the time, place, and circumstances of the supposed invention beyond 1500 years, Mr. Campbell had no more right to say that it was only "a few years older," than that it was 300 years older—and this would bring us at once to the days of Christ and his apostles. I see no unfairness then in taking this admission of Mr. Campbell as equivalent to the acknowledgment of the divine origin of infant baptism.

Mr. Robert Robinson, in his History of Baptism,[7] says, "The baptism of babes first appeared in the most ignorant and most impure part of the Catholic world, Africa. It was not the offspring of critical learning, or sound philosophy, for it sprang up among men destitute of both, nor did any one ever take the African fathers for philosophers, or critical investigators of the sacred oracles of God; and if they be all

[7] Page 177.

taken for moral men, they are overprized, for an eyewitness hath characterized African Christians quite otherwise." And why did not Tertullian say this, and thus at once justify his views of infant baptism? Why did not Pelagius, in his controversy with Augustine, say it, and thus at once refute the objection founded upon infant baptism? There is not one word of authentic proof in favor of the unqualified and bold declaration of the Baptist historian. The declaration is incredible, since the whole pædobaptist church would have discovered the truth of it, had it been true, and so never have advocated the doctrine of infant baptism. No notice of the supposed innovation is upon record. Mr. Robinson, it seems, in his history of baptism, has carefully searched all the records in his reach on this subject, *and it is certain, that he furnishes not one word in proof of the accuracy of his opinion or surmise.* Indeed, this oft-repeated assertion, that infant baptism originated in the corruptions of the Romish Church, has been already proved to be utterly false; and upon the showing of Mr. Robinson himself, infant baptism was a prevalent practice of the primitive church long *before* the origin of the Romish Church.

But where the admissions of the Baptists are limited, and where Mr. Campbell is silent, *we have heard the evidence of* JUSTIN MARTYR, IRENÆUS, ORIGEN, TERTULLIAN, CYPRIAN, AUGUSTINE, PELAGIUS, AMBROSE, and others, filling up this interval of a few years, and COMPLETING and CONFIRMING *the admissions of the Baptist Church.*

Nay, further, instead of taking you back a little beyond 1500 years, I have conducted you into the past nearly six thousand years, guided by the lamp of Revelation, and revealed to you all the way the right of children to church membership, formally acknowledged under every dispensation of grace since the covenant was made with Abraham. As old as the world is the right of children to share with

their parents in the love and mercy of God—and this right has continued unrepealed till the present time.

It is a matter of inquiry, why the Baptists should fix the time of this supposed innovation in the *latter part* of the second century, and the answer is easy. The earliest objection to infant baptism they find upon ecclesiastical records is made by Tertullian—which we have already considered—and forthwith they conclude, that the innovation was made a "little earlier" than Tertullian's times—that is, between the times of the apostles and the age of Tertullian. Very well: Tertullian flourished about the year 204, that is, about *one hundred* years after the apostolic age. Now Mr. Campbell says, in his debate with McCalla, p. 366, "Of forty-four writers, called orthodox, besides a *great* many called heterodox, who lived, and taught, and wrote, from the Apostle John's time till the time of Tertullian, not one mentions infant baptism." Admit this to be true—which we do not—what then? Why, their *silence* is positive proof that infant baptism was *not* introduced in their times. For though some of these writers were no doubt baptized by the apostles themselves, and were intimate with the apostles—though many of them were descended from pious parentage—though many of them were men of splendid abilities and of extensive and varied information, ever watchful and jealous of the truth, and wrote and preached much in favor of the pure doctrines of Christ, and against error, (for a "great many called *heterodox*" existed at this time,)—though the orthodox and heterodox parties were engaged in fierce controversies on theological subjects during this period—though many of the orthodox died martyrs to the truth, and thus proved their faithful attachment to the cause of Christianity—yet "not one of them mentions infant baptism as an innovation"—not one of them raises his warning voice in opposition to this supposed innovation.

This is incredible, if infant baptism *was* an innovation. It is incontestable, that if any of the modern Baptists' way of thinking existed at this time, they would have recorded their earnest and unqualified opposition to the innovation. Where was the Baptist Church at this time? But this is not all. As already stated, we have the positive evidence of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and Tertullian, who lived at this time, in favor of infant baptism, as an apostolic institution and practice.—We shall continue our examination of the objection before us in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF OPPOSITION TO INFANT BAPTISM.

As the history of the time, place, and circumstances of the supposed innovation of infant baptism, cannot be shown by the Baptists, the divine institution of the sacred rite, and its consequent apostolic practice, must be admitted. This conclusion is greatly strengthened by the fact, that we can clearly show the time, place, and circumstances of *opposition* to infant baptism. Opposition to infant baptism originated in the *twelfth* century, when one *Peter de Bruis*, of Languedoc, amid the papal darkness that overspread Europe, arose, and publicly preached *that infants ought not to be baptized, because they could not believe, and therefore could not be saved.* He continued to preach this heresy for about twenty years, during which time he gathered about him a considerable number of followers, but was finally arrested about the year 1144, by papal authority, and burned, and his followers dispersed. The followers of Peter de Bruis, according to Milner, Wall, and others, "opposed the

building of churches, and said that singing was mocking God," &c.; and in regard to infant baptism, they say, "Christ, sending his disciples out to preach, says in the gospel, Go ye out into all the land, and preach the gospel to every creature—he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned. From these words of our Saviour, it is plain that none can be saved, unless he believe, and is baptized; that is, have both Christian faith and baptism. For not *one* of these, but *both together*, do save! *So that infants, though they by you be baptized, yet by reason of their age, they cannot believe, are not saved.*" This is the only consistent interpretation of the great commission, if faith, in all cases, is necessary to baptism and salvation, AND IS THE FIRST PUBLIC OPPOSITION TO INFANT BAPTISM UPON RECORD—the followers of Gundulphus excepted, who, according to Wall, said, "This is our doctrine, to renounce the world, to bridle the lusts of the flesh, to maintain ourselves by the labor of our own hands, to do violence to no man, to love the brethren. If this plan of righteousness be observed, *there is no need of baptism; if it be neglected, baptism is no avail.*"

The doctrine of Peter de Bruis was little known from this time till the commencement of the Reformation, when it appears, about the year 1521, the sect revived in considerable numbers, "chiefly from Saxony and the adjacent countries, headed by one Munzer, Stubner, and Storck, and are described by various writers as very *fanatical, turbulent*, and *seditious.*" According to Mosheim, "they declared war against all laws, governments, and magistrates of every kind. But this seditious crowd was routed and dispersed without much difficulty, by the Elector of Saxony and other princes: Munzer was put to death, and his factious followers scattered abroad in different places." Afterward more timid, yet they continued to disseminate their principles, and were

called *Anabaptists*, till, about the year 1533, "a portion of them, perhaps more fanatical and seditious than others, headed by John Matthison, John Bockhold, a tailor, and one Gerard, took the city of Munster, deposed the magistrates, and proclaimed John Bockhold king and legislator of their new hierarchy. Munster was taken the next year, after a long siege, their *New Jerusalem* destroyed, as they called it, and its mock monarch punished with a most painful death. The better and larger portion of them received and looked up afterward to Menno, a native of Friesland, as their leader, who had formerly been a *Popish priest*, and who, with great zeal and industry, labored among them for more than twenty-five years. He drew up a plan of doctrine and discipline, and reduced the scattered sects into more moderation and consistency. They began now to be called by the name of Mennonites as well as Anabaptists. But by continuing to modify still more their tenets, and to oppose the names by which they were called, they succeeded in obtaining for themselves in after ages the name of *Baptists*."[1]

Says Benedict, a Baptist historian, "Under this head—the German Anabaptists or Mennonites—I shall include the whole family of this people, as described by Mosheim, who will be my principal guide in their history from the remote depths of antiquity."[2] Then let us hear Mosheim as Benedict quotes him. "The true origin of that sect which acquired the name of *anabaptists* by administering the rite of baptism to those who came over to their communion, and derived that of *Mennonites* from the famous man to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity, is hid in the remote depths of antiquity, and is of consequence ex-

[1] Mosheim, vol. ii. cent. 16th, part ii. c. 3.

[2] Benedict's Hist. of Baptists, p. 44.

tremely difficult to be ascertained. This uncertainty will not appear surprising, when it is considered that this sect started up *all of a sudden* in several countries at the same point of time, &c. Their progress was rapid; for in a short space of time, their *discourses, visions,* and *predictions* excited commotions in a great part of Europe, and drew into their communion a prodigious multitude, whose *ignorance rendered them easy victims* to the illusions of enthusiasm. *Some* of them maintained, among others, the following points of doctrine: that the baptism of infants was an invention of the devil; that every Christian was invested with the power to preach the gospel, and consequently that the church stood in no need of ministers or pastors; that in the kingdom of Christ civil magistrates were absolutely useless; and that God still continued to reveal his will to chosen persons by dreams and visions."[3] Such are the opposers of infant baptism! And such the founders of the Baptist Church! But what else does Mosheim say of the anabaptists or Mennonites? Why, that "it is difficult to determine, with certainty the particular spot that gave birth to that *seditious* and *pestilential* sect of anabaptists, whose *tumultuous* and *desperate* attempts were equally *pernicious to the cause of religion and the civil interests of mankind;*"—that "we may fix this period *soon after the dawn of the Reformation in Germany,* when Luther arose to set bounds to the ambition of Rome;"—that "this *detestable faction,* in 1521, began their fanatical works, under the guidance of Munzer, Stubner, Storck, and other leaders of the same furious complexion;"—that "they declared war against all laws, governments, and magistrates of every kind;"—that "a great part of this rabble seemed really delirious, and nothing more extravagant or more incredible can be imagined than the

[3] Benedict's Hist. of Baptism, p. 45, 46.

dreams and visions that were constantly arising in their disordered brains."[4] Nor is this all. Mosheim defines the extent of the "remote depths of antiquity." He says, further on: "The Mennonites are not entirely mistaken when they boast of their descent from the Waldenses, Petrobrussians, and other ancient sects, which are usually considered witnesses of the truth in the times of universal darkness and superstition." This must have reference to the twelfth century, since he calls sects that arose at that time, "ancient sects." In proof that he intended to go no further back than the tenth century, is the undoubted and universally admitted fact, that the Petrobrussian sect was, as he states, "founded about the year 1110, by Peter De Bruis," from whom they derived their name. He fixes the rise of the Waldenses some years after. "They were so called from their parent and founder Peter Waldus, who commenced his ministry about the year 1160." This is the meaning of Mosheim. And with these began opposition to infant baptism. "Remote depths of antiquity!" Give Mosheim's remark the utmost latitude—and is this the *foundation* of the Baptist Church? A foundation laid—where, by whom, and under what circumstances, nobody knows! Should any system of vital importance be embraced upon such vain and flimsy pretensions? If such pretensions be true, the foundation is *unknown;* if they be *false,* the foundation does not exist. Nor is this all. Respecting Menno, the founder of the Mennonites, Mosheim says, "he expressed his abhorrence of the licentious tenets which several anabaptists held in relation to the baptism of infants, the millennium, &c.: *he explained and modified them in such a manner, as made them resemble the religious tenets which were universally received in the Protestant churches.*"[5] And

[4] Mosheim vol. ii. cent. 16th, part ii. c. 3.

[5] Ibid. part ii. c. 3.

Wall observes, "One thing Cassander says of this Menno that is particular, viz. "that whereas some of these men (the Mennonites) had first endeavored to fix the origin of infant baptism upon some pope of Rome, Menno had more sense: *he was forced to own that it had been in use from the apostles' times.* But he said that the false apostles were the authors of it."[6] Some Baptist writers claim descent for the Baptist Church from the Waldenses, a body of Christians inhabiting the valleys of the Alps, and brought to light in the twelfth century. They were generally a pious and exemplary people—advocated many of the doctrines of the Reformation—and opposed the false pretensions and superstitious additions of the Papal Church. BUT THEY DID NOT OPPOSE INFANT BAPTISM: this is the only point that concerns us, and which we shall now attempt to prove.[6] When certain Romish priests accused them of refusing baptism to their children, they denied the charge, but acknowledged in certain instances that they had delayed baptism because their own pastors or barbs were abroad in other parts of the work of the church, and that hereby the baptism of their children was often delayed longer than they desired.[7] Their own language is, "*Neither is the* TIME *or* PLACE *appointed for those who must be baptized;* but charity, and the edification of the church and congregation, ought to be the rule in this matter; yet notwithstanding *we bring our children to be baptized,* WHICH THEY OUGHT TO DO, *to whom they are most nearly related as their parents, or those whom God has inspired with such a charity.*" Wall gives the following account:—"The present Waldenses, or Vaudois in Piedmont, who are the posterity of those of old, *do practise infant baptism:* and they were *also found in the practice of it, when the Protestants of Luther's reformation sent to know their*

[6] Wall, vol. 2, p. 301.

[7] Perrin's Hist. of the Waldenses.

state and doctrine, and to confer with them: and they themselves do say, that *their fathers never practised otherwise.* And they give proof of it from an old book of theirs, called the Spiritual Almanack, where infant baptism is owned."[8]

In the 17th article of the rule of faith and practice, adopted by all the Waldenses assembled at Angrogne, Sept. 12, 1535, they state their doctrine of the sacraments as follows:—Art. XVII. "As to the sacraments, it has been determined by the Holy Scriptures, that we have but two sacramental signs or symbols, which Jesus Christ has left unto us: the one is baptism, the other the eucharist, or Lord's supper, which we receive to demonstrate our perseverance in the faith, ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE WE MADE IN OUR BAPTISM IN OUR INFANCY," &c. Here is the doctrine of the Waldenses of this assembly; and it seems that ALL in this assembly had been baptized in their infancy, and that it was the general practice among the Waldenses to baptize in infancy. Bishop Usher quotes out of Hoveden's Annals in Henry II., fol. 319, edit. London, a confession of faith made by the *boni homines* of Tholouse—this was one name given to those sects of men that have since been called *Waldenses* —who being summoned and examined before a meeting of bishops, abbots, &c., repeated it before the assembly; but being urged to swear it, refused. In the body of which confession they say: "We believe also that no person is saved but what is baptized; *and that infants are saved by baptism.*" Mr. Baxter having been called upon by Danvers to produce any confession of theirs of any ancient date that owned infant baptism, produces this, which was about the year 1176, and says, "Would you have a fuller proof?"[9] Again, referring to the superstitious additions introduced

[8] Wall, vol. ii. 240.

[9] Murdock's note on Mosheim, Wall, vol. ii. 243, 244.

by the Papists, they say: "The things which are not necessary to baptism, are the exorcisms, the breathings, the sign of the cross upon the head or forehead of the *infant*, the salt put into the mouth, the spittle into the ears and nostrils, the unction on the breast," &c. And it is with reference to these corruptions that Perrin, the historian of the Waldenses, observes, "being constrained for *some hundred years* to suffer their *children* to be baptized by the priests of the Church of Rome, they deferred the doing thereof as long as they could, because they had in detestation *those human inventions* that were *added* to the sacrament, which they held to be the pollution thereof."[10] Consider one more fact: "Soon after the opening of the Reformation by Luther, they sought intercourse with the Reformed churches of Geneva and France; *held communion with them;* and appeared eager to testify their respect and affection for them as brethren in the Lord. Now it is well known that the Churches of Geneva and France, at this time, were in the habitual use of infant baptism. *This single fact is sufficient to prove that the Waldenses were pædobaptists.*"[11] Descent is sometimes traced from the Cathari of Germany, the Paterines in Italy, and the Paulicians in Greece. But the following are well authenticated facts in church history, that "all these sects were *semi-manicheans;* that the Paulicians denied that this inferior and visible world is the production of the Supreme Being, and distinguish between the Creator of the world, and of the human body, from the Most High who dwells in heaven—and hence some have been led to conceive that they were a branch of the Gnostics rather than

[10] Wall, vol. ii. 241.

[11] Dr. Samuel Miller on Baptism. And Dr. Miller adds, on same page, "If they had adopted the doctrine of our Baptist brethren, and laid the same stress on it with them, it is manifest that such intercourse would have been wholly out of the question."

of the Manichees; that they refused to celebrate the institution of the Lord's supper; that they rejected the books of the Old Testament, and looked upon the writers of that sacred history as inspired by the Creator of this world, and not by the Supreme God; that they excluded proselytes and elders from all part in the administration of the church; that they interpreted the New Testament *allegorically*, and rejected the two Epistles of St. Peter; that instead of confessing the human nature and substantial sufferings of Christ, they amused their fancy with a celestial body, and with a fantastic crucifixion, that eluded the impotent malice of the Jews; that they believed in the eternity of matter;"[12] and many other doctrines they entertained equally irrational, unphilosophical, and unscriptural. And they were branded as heretics by the Greek Church. Nor is this all. However heretical they were in the above doctrines, *they never opposed infant baptism*, as no evidence of a satisfactory nature has ever been adduced that they rejected infant baptism. Why the Baptists trace the origin of their church to such sects as these, it is impossible to conceive, unless it is that they strenuously opposed certain extravagant dogmas of the Papal Church, such as the *cross*, the worship of the *Virgin Mary*, and other vain rites and ceremonies of human invention. The pretensions of others to descent from the *Donatists* are likewise unfounded. This sect arose in the year 311, and is regarded as a schismatic body, and derives its name from Donatus, the principal leader in the controversy that gave rise to the sect. And let it be carefully observed, that after their separation from the church, they made no alteration in ecclesiastical organization, none in doctrine, *and continued the practice of infant baptism as*

[12] Waddington; Wall; Buck, p. 329; Mosheim, vol. ii. 233; Milner, vol. i. 572; Ruter, p. 154.

they had done before their separation. "The doctrine of the Donatists was conformable to that of the church, as even their adversaries confess."[13] And yet Mosheim calls them a "*schismatical pestilence,*" and Milner observes, "as in their origin, so in their manners and spirit all along, they seem unworthy to be compared with the first class, the Novatian."[14] Another ecclesiastical historian observes, "The schism of the Donatists was an impetuous torrent which inundated and desolated the adjacent country; but its limits were prescribed, and its mischief confined to the African provinces."[15] "Among all the reasons that the Donatists gave why the baptism of the Catholics was null, there is none that lays any blame on their giving it in infancy. But on the contrary, St. Austin does often make use of the instance of infant baptism, as *granted by them*, to overthrow some of their errors that they had about baptism."[16] That the Donatists did not reject, but practise infant baptism, is evident from the following testimony:—"About the time when the third Council of Carthage was held, the schism of the Donatists began to break apace, and those who had been brought up in it came over in great numbers to the communion of the church. This party of men differed nothing from the Catholics in any point either of doctrine, or of ceremonies, or of *sacraments.* Now the bishops of this council debated among themselves how far it was expedient to admit any that returned from this schism to the church into holy orders. And as for those who, having been once baptized in the Catholic church, did, after they came to years of discretion, revolt to the Donatists, and were baptized by them, they agreed that such, upon their return to the church, might be admitted to lay communion, but never

[13] Mosheim, vol. i. 123.
[14] Milner, vol. i. 275.
[15] Ruter, p. 81.
[16] Wall, vol. ii. 130.

bear any office in the church. *But the case of those who had been born among the Donatists,* AND HAD BEEN IN THEIR INFANCY BAPTIZED BY THEM, and after they came to years of discretion, disliked the schism, and came over to the church, seemed very different. Concerning these they could not come to any resolution at present; and therefore they agreed that the advice of two of the most noted neighboring churches should be asked in that matter, and they made a canon in these words: 'In reference to the Donatists, it is resolved that we do ask the advice of our brethren and fellow-bishops Siricius and Simplicianus, concerning those only who IN INFANCY ARE BAPTIZED AMONG THEM,' &c. The answer of these two bishops seems to have been in favor of those concerning whom their opinion was asked; and four years after, the Council of Carthage determines the point absolutely, that such persons may, if there be occasion, be promoted to the ministry. You remember that in a former council it was resolved, *that they who were in their* INFANCY BAPTIZED AMONG THE DONATISTS, and when they came to the age of understanding, acknowledged the truth, &c.—they were received by us—all will grant that such may undoubtedly be promoted to church offices, especially in times of so great need."[17] Nor is this all. Optatus, Bishop of Milevium, in persuading the Donatists to union with the church, reminds them that "the ecclesiastical organization is one and the same with us and you. Though men's *minds* are at variance, the *sacraments are at* NONE. And we may say we *believe alike, and are sealed with one and the same seal: not otherwise* BAPTIZED than you, nor otherwise ordained than you."[18] And Cresconius, a *Donatist,* anxious to reunite his brethren with the church, settles this question: "There is between us and you one religion,

[17] Wall, vol. i. 307–310.

[18] Ibid. vol. i. 161.

THE SAME SACRAMENTS, NOTHING IN CHRISTIAN CEREMONIES DIFFERENT. *It is a schism that is between us, not a heresy.*"[19] DONATISTS THEREFORE BAPTIZED INFANTS.

But the Baptists attempt to trace descent also from the *Novatians*, a sect that arose in the year 250, and takes its name from Novatian, who separated from the church, not on account of *doctrine*, but mere points of *discipline*. "They were distinguished merely by their *discipline;* for their religious and doctrinal tenets do not appear to be at all different from those of the church."[20] "There was no difference in point of *doctrine* between the Novatians and other Christians."[21] Novatian had been a *Stoic* before he was a Christian—and hence probably the rigor of his discipline. "Thus was formed the first body of Christians, who, in modern language, may be called DISSENTERS; that is, men who separate from the church, not on grounds of *doctrine*, but of *discipline*. The Novatians held no opinion contrary to the faith of the gospel."[22] The origin of this schism is given by Neander: "This dissension arose from *a contest about the election of a bishop*, and from a contention of *opinions on the subject of church penance.*"[23] And Neander observes of Novatian, "when he thought himself near his end, he was baptized *on his sick-bed;*" and in a note he quotes from a letter from Cornelius, bishop of Rome, to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, "Novatian being in danger of death, he received the rite of baptism only by SPRINKLING, as his condition required."[24] Benedict himself, whose "History of the Baptists" has superseded that of Backus, admits, in his quotation from Mr. Orchard's account of the Novatians, all we have said about *doctrine*. "There was *no*

[19] Wall, vol. i. 161.
[20] Watson's Theol. Dict. p. 708.
[21] Mosheim, vol. i. 96.
[22] Milner, vol. i. 180.
[23] Neander's Church Hist. p. 142.
[24] Ibid. p. 142.

difference in points of doctrine between the Novatians and other Christians."[25] The conclusion then is inevitable, *that the Novatians* BAPTIZED INFANTS.

The testimony of Augustine, Pelagius, and Celestius is conclusive on this subject. The celebrated controversy between them, to which we have already referred, occurred after the rise of the Novatians. Now had the Novatians denied infant baptism, these three men could not have failed to know the fact, for they were great travellers, and careful observers of the manners and customs of the countries through which they travelled. Pelagius and Celestius "spent the prime of their age at Rome, a place to which all the people of the world then had a resort. They were both for some time at Carthage in Africa. Then one settled at Jerusalem, and the other travelled through all the noted Greek and Eastern churches in Europe and Asia. It is impossible there should have been any church that had any singular practice in this matter, but they must have heard of it. So that one may fairly conclude that there was not at this time, nor in the memory of the men of this time, any Christian society that denied baptism to infants."[26] Pelagius declared, that "he never heard, no, not even any impious heretic or sectary, that denied infants baptism." And besides, Wall continues, "there are so many books extant, written at the same time, by Cyprian, Eusebius, Optatus, Austin, &c., containing a ventilation of all the disputes between the Catholics and these men, in which nothing has ever been observed that should intimate that they had any such practice or opinion."[27] Indeed, Mr. Benedict concedes the whole point at issue. "As this [the Novatian] is *the first* party of importance who were acknowledged to be sound

[25] Benedict, edit. 1848, p. 6.

[26] Wall, vol. i. 476.

[27] Ibid. vol. ii. 129.

in doctrine which *withdrew from the* ESTABLISHED CHURCH, it is proper to give a full account of the reasons which led to the separation," &c.[28] And what were "the reasons?" Why just the reasons given by the learned authors above, and *infant baptism is not mentioned as one of those reasons.* And finally, the third Council of Carthage, which unanimously refused to defer the baptism of infants till the eighth day, gave its decision AT THE VERY TIME, IN THE VERY YEAR, IN WHICH THE SCHISM OF NOVATIAN OCCURRED. Thus, the testimony of a *thousand years* from the birth of Christ is undisturbed by a single instance of opposition to the apostolic practice of infant baptism. Nay, further, there was no opposition to infant baptism for *twelve hundred years,* except from Tertullian, who admitted the *universal prevalence* of it in his day, and the Petrobrussians, who founded their opposition to infant baptism upon *grounds* that would *overturn* the Baptist Church. Nay, I will go further. For more than *fifteen hundred years* of the Christian era, there was not a single church on earth that opposed infant baptism upon the ground occupied by the modern Baptist Church. In the year 1522, according to authentic ecclesiastical history, the anabaptists in Germany rejected infant baptism upon the principles adopted by the Baptist Church of the present day. This is absolutely and strictly true, according to the positive and unequivocal testimony of the history of the church. Opposition to infant baptism began in the *Dark Ages*—but we have light to trace this opposition to its earliest origin, and to define satisfactorily its authors and its character. If opposition to the practice of infant baptism were now to begin in this enlightened day, the Baptist Church could never exist; and if the Baptist Church would now examine its claims and pretensions on this sub-

[28] Hist. of the Baptists, p. 4.

ject by the light of the sacred record and ecclesiastical history, it would soon cease to exist as an independent branch of the Christian church. Opposition to infant baptism can originate in nothing else than *mere surmises, vague conjectures, and fondly cherished fancies.* It was this kind of opposition to infant baptism that Calvin resisted so boldly in his day. Says he, "Whereas certain persons spread abroad among simple people that there passed a long series of years after the resurrection of Christ, in which infant baptism was not practised, *therein do they lie most abominably; for there is no writer so ancient that doth not certainly refer the beginning thereof to the age of the apostles.*" And the learned Brown affirms the same thing: "None can without the most *affronted imposition* allege that infant baptism was not commonly allowed in the primitive ages of Christianity." And Milner crushes the whole opposition to infant baptism by a sweeping, universal negative: "*We never had,*" says he, "*such a custom as that of confining baptism to adults, nor the churches of God.*"

So far therefore from defining the time, place, and circumstances of the supposed innovation of infant baptism, we find every thing to the contrary; the church in no age making any effort to innovate on this subject, but continuing in uninterrupted tranquillity respecting the authenticity, validity, and practice of infant baptism, for more than a thousand years; while we are able definitely to expose to the world the very time, place, and circumstances of opposition to infant baptism—a long-standing doctrine of the Christian church.

I cannot close this objection without making one more remark. It is admitted on all hands, that infant baptism has been the practice of the church since the close of the second century. It has been proved, that opposition to this practice did not commence within a thousand years from the

beginning of the Christian church. It is also unquestionable, that, had the Baptist church existed at any time during this period, it would have opposed the practice as unscriptural, and as an innovation; and the Baptist Church would certainly have obtained information of the time, place, and circumstances of the innovation. But no opposition to infant baptism, as a primitive and apostolic practice, is heard of in the church till the twelfth century—nay, upon the principles of modern Baptists, none till the beginning of the sixteenth century—AND THEREFORE THE BAPTIST CHURCH MUST DATE ITS ORIGIN IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. Had the Baptist Church existed sooner, we should have heard of its opposition to infant baptism sooner. The beginning of opposition to infant baptism, upon the principles maintained by the Baptist Church, is coeval with the beginning of the Baptist Church: the latter commences with the former: and therefore to find the time of the one is to find out the origin of the other: which we have done in this chapter.[29]

[29] Mr. Gale takes exceptions against the books, and translations of the books of the Fathers, whenever they support the doctrine of infant baptism. Dr. Wall replies: "To one that is so endless in his cavils and exceptions against the books and translations, we must, I think, stop his mouth with that answer of Mr. Stokes: 'It is your common method to evade the authority of the Fathers, by saying, they are but translations, &c. But *you have* NEITHER ORIGINALS NOR TRANSLATIONS of those early times on your side.' Were there no anti-pædobaptists then to translate?" &c. Wall, vol. iv. 362.

CHAPTER III.

OTHER OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

1. "THERE is no positive command respecting infant baptism: infant baptism is not explicitly enjoined in the Scriptures."

We reply, admitting this to be true—which we do not—this is the strongest proof of its validity. It is as *clearly implied*, in certain scriptures, as if it were *explicitly enjoined;* and a *clearly implied* duty is as binding as one *positively enjoined.* But while it is often alluded to incidentally, and embraced in general commissions without specification, *because it was well known at the time, and admitted by all,*—in other scriptures, as we have seen, it is *explicitly and positively referred to.* Besides, if the force of the above objection be admitted, for the same reason, women should not be admitted to the Lord's supper; nor should the church consider it optional to select the mode of communing, or the *quality* and *quantity* of bread and wine to be received; nor should we keep the first day of the week instead of the seventh as the Sabbath. The change of the Sabbath is not explicitly and positively enjoined, yet it is *implied,* and the obligation to keep the Sabbath continues through all generations. Moreover, the absence of positive repeal is equivalent to the confirmation of the original statute, as we have proved in a former part of this treatise.

2. "Repentance and faith are necessary to baptism: infants cannot perform these conditions, and therefore they ought not to be baptized."

(1.) True, they cannot believe—the power of faith is not yet developed; nor are the laws of faith yet applicable. They cannot repent—they have nothing to repent of—they are justified through the atonement of Christ, and this justification gives them as good a title to baptism as repentance and faith give to the adult. Where sin has been committed, repentance and faith are necessary, but where it has not been committed, repentance and faith are not necessary; and therefore the infant is just as innocent in Christ as the penitent believer, and has on this ground just as good a title to baptism as the adult believer.

(2.) The Scriptures require faith of *adults*, and hence adults must exercise faith before they are entitled to baptism. The obligation of faith can be imposed only upon those who are capable of believing; but infants are not capable of believing, and therefore they are not required to believe in order to be saved or to be baptized. The irresponsibility of infancy presents no stronger obstacle to infant baptism than it does to infant salvation, and consequently the obligation of faith enters not into the question of infant baptism as a prerequisite, any more than into the question of infant salvation, and is confined wholly to the case of adults, in whose minds the power of faith is developed, and to whom alone, because they are *capable* of believing, the principles of responsibility are applicable.

(3.) If this objection is of any force against infant baptism, it is of equal force against infant circumcision. But God judged otherwise. The Jews were "broken off through unbelief," which signifies that they stood by faith—and yet their children were graffed in with them. Faith never stood in the way of children under the old dispensation; and as God is always the same, the covenant the same, the principles of moral obligation the same, moral relations the same, the relations of children to God in Christ Jesus the same,

and to their parents the same, why make any change in the application of the great covenant that has received children from the beginning? Nothing short of express command from heaven, accompanied by a miracle, can exclude children from baptism for want of faith.

(4.) The objection founded upon the supposed necessity of repentance and faith as preliminary to baptism, will vanish when we properly distinguish between conditional and unconditional salvation. The conditionality of salvation has no reference to infants, as must be admitted by all, and hence, wherever repentance and faith are explicitly mentioned in the Scriptures as the condition of baptism, the case of infants is not referred to, but the duty of those who are capable of repentance and faith. The Apostle Paul declares, "that if any would not work, neither should he eat." This declaration has reference alone to those who are capable of working, and yet infants, who cannot work, are not hereby to be deprived of food. Infants can no more be excluded from baptism upon this ground, than they can be held responsible for the discharge of the conditions of salvation. Rules and obligations applicable to persons of riper years cannot be prescribed for infants in order to baptism, since baptism, as in the case of circumcision, is due to infants on grounds independent of accountability. It is on this ground likewise, that infants are not regarded as proper subjects for the communion, since, in all cases, the proper observance of the holy eucharist is involved in the scope of responsibility Finally, the adult is saved *conditionally*, and therefore he is baptized *conditionally;* but the infant is saved *unconditionally*, and therefore he should be baptized *unconditionally*. The adult is entitled to both baptism and salvation *conditionally;* the infant is entitled to both baptism and salvation *unconditionally*. If the infant has an *unconditional* title to salvation, the *substance*, he has undoubtedly the same

kind of right to baptism, the outward, visible *sign* and *seal* of salvation. You cheerfully grant the infant, dying in infancy, an unconditional right to spiritual baptism, and yet deny his right to water baptism, which is emblematical of the spiritual. Baptism is the outward sign and seal of the covenant of salvation, setting forth the right of the believer to all the blessings of that covenant in time and eternity. But the infant has an unconditional title to all these covenanted blessings, and therefore he has an unconditional and indubitable title to baptism, the outward sign and seal of the covenant conveying these blessings. The title of the infant and the believer to salvation is the same; their title to baptism therefore is the same. In a word, the objection is founded upon the infant's *unconsciousness*. But the infant's unconsciousness is no objection to his salvation: he is saved through the *atonement* of Christ. But he is unconscious of this saving interest in the atonement, and as his unconsciousness does not destroy his title to salvation, it cannot invalidate his title to baptism that sets forth his interest in the atonement. On the ground of the infant's unconsciousness, dreadful as the conclusion is—and yet it is unavoidable from such premises—*the infant ought not to be saved*. But his unconsciousness does not disqualify him for salvation, and therefore his unconsciousness does not disentitle him to baptism. In a word, *in view of the great principles of the plan of salvation, it is impossible to deny the infant an unconditional title to baptism, without denying him an unconditional title to salvation*—which would be a most appalling heterodoxy as the foundation of the Baptist Church. The conclusion is inevitable, that repentance and faith enter in no respect into the question of infant baptism.

There are several other forms of this objection to infant baptism which we will here consider.

"There is not a single case mentioned in the New

Testament in which baptism did not require faith in the adult; therefore children ought not to be baptized." There is not a single case mentioned in the Old Testament in which circumcision did not require faith in the adult; therefore children ought not to have been circumcised under the Jewish dispensation. The inference in both cases is equally unsound and inconclusive. For as Abraham was circumcised in view of his faith, and circumcision extended to his children, so baptism should be administered to the children of believers, to say no more, under the Christian dispensation. The sacred record of the baptism of whole families upon the opening of the Christian dispensation, introduces no new order of things respecting children; the statements are made as if the old order of things had been subjected to no innovation in this matter. Thus, "Lydia was baptized *and her family;*" the jailer "was baptized, AND ALL HIS, straightway." "The promise is unto you, AND YOUR *children.*" Besides, not one single adult believer baptized by the apostles, is spoken of as descended from *Christian* parentage, while not one adult believer, descended from *Christian* parentage, is said to have been baptized in adult age. That "the baptism of adult believers is the only gospel baptism," is argued by Mr. Jewett "from the *spiritual* nature of the Christian dispensation." What, was not the Jewish dispensation *spiritual* as well as temporal? If not, how could circumcision be "the seal of the *righteousness of faith?*" If the Jewish dispensation was not in part *spiritual, then none under that dispensation could be saved, except by the light of nature;* and so the only peculiar blessings secured by the Jewish dispensation to the Jews, were those of a *temporal* nature! But the Jewish dispensation was *spiritual* as well as temporal, and hence circumcision was the sign and seal of a spiritual dispensation. And on this very ground infants have a better title to baptism than

Jewish children had to circumcision, since children now are under a better dispensation, and especially since Christ has left unrepealed the original enactment made in their case.

"The significancy of baptism, and the obligation under which its reception lays its subjects, afford conclusive proof that it should be applied only to believers." So far as baptism refers to adults, this is true. The same conclusion is true as it respects children: in riper years, they can recognise the "significancy," and sanction and discharge "the obligations" involved in infant baptism. In baptism, the infant is brought under obligation to repent and believe, should God in his providence spare him to the age of accountability, which obligation is imposed upon him independently of his unconsciousness and non-concurrence, and which he is bound to keep and perform. Obligation, in the case of infants, is left to be perfected by subsequent obedience—indeed, infant baptism expresses the obligations of repentance, faith, love of Christ, and a holy life. Infants were circumcised in view of *future* obligations to repent and believe; hereby they became "debtors to the law." So under John's dispensation, the Jews were baptized unto future repentance and faith. And so children now are baptized in view of the solemn obligations of the whole subsequent life.

"The gospel saves none but by faith. The gospel has to do with those who hear it. It is good news; but to infants it is no news at all. None shall ever be saved by the gospel who do not believe it. Consequently, by the gospel no infant can be saved. Infants are saved by the *death* of Christ, but not by [believing] the gospel, not by faith."[1]

Now to believe in the gospel, and to be saved by the death of Christ, are one and the same thing in the end, for salvation is the result. Believers are saved by faith in the death

[1] Jewett, p. 101.

of Christ, and infants are saved by the death of Christ without faith; hence children are as much saved by the death of Christ as believers are. The gospel has glad tidings as specifically for the infant as it has for the adult. If not, why mention them at all in the Old and New Testaments? The mere fact, that infants cannot "hear," "believe," and understand the gospel, does not invalidate their title to the blessings of the gospel, since Christ *died* for them, and now ever lives in heaven to make intercession for them, and therefore, *by the gospel*, their title to baptism is as certainly secured to them as salvation is provided for them.

"The Bible makes faith a pre-requisite of baptism."

So it does in the case of the adult, and such should be the pre-requisite in the case of every adult person in the present day, who has not been baptized—such was the order in the days of the apostles—such should be the demand of missionaries in pagan countries—and such was the order in the case of Abraham, who first exercised faith and then was circumcised. But with the posterity of believers—to say no more—in Christendom and in paganism, it is different, as it was with the posterity of Abraham. The right of infants to formal initiation into the church is connected with every formal dispensation of the covenant of grace in all time. In a word, the Baptists adduce scriptures referring to *adult* baptism, and insist on the *universal* necessity of understanding and faith in order to the legitimate administration of baptism. This is a sophism. The premises are particular—the conclusion is universal, which is illogical. The premises specifically embrace adults only, and hence children cannot be brought into the conclusion. The Unitarians are in the habit of adducing those passages which only prove that Christ is *man*, and from which they infer he is not *God*, which is a sophism, since his divinity does not enter into the premises. We all agree on the points of

adult baptism and Christ's humanity, but these points of agreement do not logically embrace the negative of *infant* baptism and Christ's *divinity*. Consequently the discussion of infant baptism must proceed upon other and appropriate premises.

To sum up our reply to the objection under consideration: —It is objected, infants cannot repent, and therefore they should not be baptized. That is the very reason why they should be baptized, provided a sufficient ground already exists on which repentance is dispensed with in the case of infants—and such is the vicarious death of Christ. Again, it is objected, infants cannot believe, and therefore they should not be baptized. Again we reply, that is the very reason why they should be baptized, provided a sufficient ground already exists on which faith is dispensed with in the case of infants—and such is the vicarious death of Christ. Again, it is objected, infants cannot exercise consciousness or moral intelligence, and therefore they ought not to be baptized. To this we reply, that is the very reason why they should be baptized, provided a sufficient ground already exists on which moral intelligence is dispensed with in the case of infants—and such is the vicarious death of Christ. Again, it is objected, infants are not responsible, and therefore they should not be baptized. And to this we reply, that is the very reason why they should be baptized, provided a sufficient ground already exists on which responsibility is dispensed with in the case of infants—and such is the vicarious death of Christ. Thus, the very reasons why baptism is denied to infants, are the very reasons why it should be granted to them. If they could repent, believe, exercise consciousness, or were responsible, their right to baptism would depend upon conditions to be performed by them; but since, in the very nature of things, they cannot be held responsible for the performance of conditions, their

right to baptism is founded upon the vicarious death of Christ—a death that answers in the sight of the law, in the case of infants, as if they had repented, believed, and obeyed the gospel—a death that dispenses, in their case, with the discharge of all conditions under the gospel as pre-requisite to baptism and salvation—a death that as fully entitles them to all the blessings of the gospel as if they had discharged all the conditions of the gospel. Indeed, the infant has just as good a right to baptism as Christ himself had to circumcision. Christ's right to circumcision was founded upon his own inherent merit; the infant's right to baptism is founded upon Christ's meritorious vicarious death for him: the gracious relation which the infant sustains to the death of Christ entitles him just as much to baptism as it does to salvation: the latter must be denied before the former can be legitimately withheld.

Again, every argument, however plausible, that is opposed to a known truth, is false. Thus, he who will not work, neither shall he eat: infants cannot work; therefore they shall not eat. Again, the Scriptures require repentance and faith in order to salvation: infants cannot repent and believe; therefore they cannot be saved. Here the known truths are, infants are entitled to food without working, and to salvation without repentance and faith. Again, "circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law;" but infants cannot keep the law; therefore their circumcision must be unprofitable. Here the truth opposed is the *wisdom* of God. Thus, the right of infants to baptism is founded upon the known truth, that they are *saved* without repentance and faith. In other words, there cannot be more in the conclusion than is contained in the premises. Thus, infants must be inserted in the premises as follows:—The Scriptures do not require repentance and faith of infants in order to salvation; therefore they may be saved without repentance

and faith. Here the conclusion is contained in the premises. The Scriptures do require repentance and faith of adults in order to baptism; therefore adults who believe are entitled to baptism. Here the conclusion is contained in the premises. The Scriptures do not require repentance and faith of infants in order to baptism; therefore infants, without repentance and faith, are entitled to baptism. Here the conclusion is contained in the premises, since infants are entitled to salvation without repentance and faith, and right to baptism is necessarily involved. The same requisitions are made upon adults for both salvation and baptism; but these requisitions are dispensed with in the case of infants for salvation, and the right to baptism follows. By repentance and faith, the adult has a right to salvation, the thing signified, and to baptism, the sign signifying; but the infant, without repentance and faith, has a right to salvation, the thing signified, and of course has a right to baptism, the thing signifying.

3. We proceed to consider another objection. "Baptism is not substituted for circumcision, and therefore children ought not to be baptized."

(1.) Then the Christian dispensation is without an initiatory sacrament, and the covenant of salvation, under the Christian dispensation, is wholly destitute of a corresponding outward sign and seal. Consequently adult believers are not initiated into the Christian church by baptism. We then ask, how are any who are entitled to salvation initiated into the Christian church? Why did Christ, upon the opening of the Christian dispensation, command his disciples to baptize? Why did the apostles baptize three thousand believers on the day of Pentecost? And why do the Baptists now baptize even adult believers? Why, because baptism is the initiating sacrament of the Christian dispensation, and hence baptism is substituted for circumcision, the ini-

tiating sacrament of the Jewish dispensation; and therefore children ought to be baptized.

(2.) We shall consider this objection further by noticing the arguments adduced in support of it.

First. "The Jewish dispensation was a civil institution." Granted; but it was more. It was typical—typical of what? Not of *temporal* blessings merely, for these were already in possession. But of spiritual blessings also, and hence it embraced the spiritual interests of children, which under the Christian dispensation cannot be formally set forth but by baptism.

Secondly. "If baptism be substituted for circumcision, then none but *male* children ought to be baptized." This by no means follows.

[1st.] *Adult* females were baptized by the apostles, and therefore, as the apostles varied in this particular, there is no reason why they might not vary also with regard to *infant* females.

[2d.] The limitation of one dispensation for special purposes, does not necessarily involve a corresponding restriction in another, in which such purposes are not embraced. The fulness of the Christian dispensation includes infant females as proper subjects of baptism, since the reasons for their exclusion from circumcision under the Jewish dispensation no longer exist. The Christian dispensation is more enlarged than the Jewish, and, like the "glorious gospel," embraces all nations; so that as circumcision is no longer answerable, an initiatory rite must be selected and enjoined, corresponding to the number of its objects—"every creature,"—and the range of its blessings—"all the world;" and the application of this rite is not confined to the eighth day, nor to place, nor to sex. Under the Jewish dispensation, *males only*, whether Jews or proselytes, received circumcision, and the whole family entered into covenant, and for

this obvious reason. It was unnecessary under the Jewish dispensation, that any initiatory rite should be applicable to the females, since, from the constitution of the Jewish polity, the rite that initiated the males represented the title of the females also to the same covenanted blessings, on the exercise of *faith*, according to the light of their dispensation. Indeed, this objection, if admitted, proves too much. *Adult* females were included in the covenant, and were members of the visible church of God under the old dispensation, though they did not receive the seal of the covenant any more than infant females. Were adult females excluded from the covenant, or from the visible church of God, under the Jewish dispensation, because they received not the token of membership? Certainly not. They were recognised as having as good a title in these respects as the infant male who had been circumcised. Besides, infant females were included in the covenant, and recognised as entitled to church membership, independently of the rite of circumcision. But infant females, and adult females who believe, are still included in the covenant, under the Christian dispensation, and as baptism is to be administered to both males and females, under the Christian dispensation, the rights which females had under the old dispensation, without circumcision, are now set forth by baptism. *The exception in the case of females is withdrawn* under the expanded and perfected dispensation of Christ: "for there is neither bond nor free, neither *male* nor *female*, but we are all one in Christ Jesus."

There is another reason why baptism should be conferred on females under the Christian dispensation. Under the civil polity of the Jewish people, as under all sound civil governments, the females are represented by the males, in voting, eligibility to office, &c.; indeed, under the Jewish polity, in both church and state, the rights of females were

in some respects absorbed in those of the males, and thus the females, from infancy, were recognised as entitled to all the privileges of the "promise" or the "everlasting covenant," and when they arrived at the proper age, they enjoyed all the privileges of the promise or covenant, in church and state. But under the Christian dispensation, the civil and ceremonial character of the Jewish dispensation having passed away, and consequently the females being no longer represented by the circumcision of the males, and infant females being included in the "promise" or "everlasting covenant" as well as the males, they are entitled to baptism, the seal of the "promise" or "everlasting covenant," under the Christian dispensation, as much as the males. Under the Jewish dispensation, their right to the blessings of the everlasting covenant was formally represented by the males, and was formally involved in their relation to the males. But under the Christian dispensation their right to the blessings of the "everlasting covenant" continues, and will continue to the end of time; and as this right is no longer represented by social or civil relations, it must be formally and sacramentally set forth by baptism, the seal of the "everlasting covenant" under the Christian dispensation. In other words, the *spiritual* meaning or signification of the sign and seal of the "everlasting covenant," contained in the circumcision of the males under the Jewish dispensation, is now expressed in baptism under the Christian dispensation. Under the Jewish dispensation, from the relation of the females to the males, the scope of circumcision was the same as though it had been conferred on both sexes: the meaning of baptism is now the same in its spiritual character as the spiritual meaning of circumcision was under the Jewish dispensation; and consequently, as the females are no longer represented by the males, they must be baptized for themselves, as expressive of their own

personal, spiritual interest in the everlasting covenant. And thus as the spiritual as well as civil interest of *infant* females was represented by the circumcision of the males under the Jewish dispensation, and answered for infant females as well as if the right had been conferred on them; and as, in the very nature of things, the spiritual interest of infant females cannot be represented by the baptism of the males under the Christian dispensation,—baptism, the seal of the everlasting covenant, under the Christian dispensation, must be conferred on infant females, or their personal spiritual interest in the everlasting covenant cannot be formally and sacramentally represented. *The very nature of the Christian dispensation entitles infant females to baptism;* for under the Christian dispensation, "there is neither bond nor free, neither *male* nor *female,* but all are one in Christ Jesus."

There is another essential reason why baptism should be conferred on females under the Christian dispensation. Often the females only in a family are converted, while the males continue in unbelief, and consequently the females should be baptized. Thus, in the nature of things, though circumcision was denied to females under the Jewish dispensation, they should receive baptism under the Christian dispensation. And as it is faith in the adult female that entitles to the blessings of the everlasting covenant, and so entitles to baptism also, the formal, sensible seal of the covenant—and as infant females are entitled to the blessings of the everlasting covenant without faith, so they are entitled to baptism also, the seal of the covenant. The rights of the adult female who believes, and the infant female, are the same—the one conditionally, the other unconditionally—and consequently baptism can no more be denied to the one than to the other. Christ is the sole representative of the infant female under the Christian dis-

pensation, and hence the right of the infant female to salvation and baptism can no more be denied than the gracious relation of the infant female to Christ can be annulled.

There is another and a special reason why circumcision should be abolished upon the establishment of Christianity. The covenant of grace, formally made with Abraham, embraces the promise of the Messiah, in whom all nations were to be blessed, and his descent was restricted to the line of Isaac. Circumcision was the formal seal to this promise, by which God was pledged to fulfil his covenant, and the Jews generally were preserved in the expectation of the promised Messiah. In this respect, circumcision had a most important spiritual signification. In a word, it had a special *prospective* sacramental import. Therefore, when the *promised Messiah came*, and made atonement for all nations, in all time, the design of circumcision was consummated, and circumcision was abolished as a rite no longer significant or sacramental in its use; and baptism, *retrospectively* referring to the establishment of Christianity by the death of Christ, and signifying the "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh," and corresponding to the boundless fulness of the gospel, was substituted in the place of circumcision.

Thirdly. "We learn from Acts, 21st chapter, that Paul was censured by many of the believing Jews, because he 'taught the Jews who were among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children.' (Ver. 21.) How natural it would have been for Paul to appease the clamor and conciliate the prejudices of the Jews, by replying that baptism was substituted for circumcision. But we hear not a word from his lips on the subject." And the inference therefore is, that baptism is not substituted for circumcision. But the inference is stronger, that *that* was the very reason why he prohibited circumcision.

It is most probable, that the apostle did not forbid circumcision in the case of children, but upon the ground that the Christian dispensation was provided with a proper substitute in their case—and hence the apostle's silence is in favor of infant baptism. The explanation of the disaffection of the Jews on this occasion, will strengthen this conclusion. Under John's dispensation, during which Jewish rites were not abolished, the Jews were permitted both to circumcise and baptize their children. Therefore, at the death of Christ, and the consequent abolition of the Jewish dispensation, they desired the same privileges that they had enjoyed under John's dispensation, to which Paul objected, on the evangelical ground that circumcision was no longer necessary. The Jews wished to circumcise as well as baptize their children. This the apostle prohibited, because baptism, being substituted for circumcision, answered the whole spiritual design of circumcision. If, after this prohibition, the silence of *Paul* is a proof that baptism is *not* substituted for circumcision, the silence of the *Jews*, on the other hand, is a proof that baptism *is* substituted for circumcision, for *they make no inquiries respecting a substitute.*

Fourthly. In referring to a council held at Jerusalem, composed of apostles and elders, to determine how far Gentile converts might conform to Jewish usages, Dr. Baldwin, quoted by Professor Knowles, observes: "By the unanimous voice of a council comprising most, if not all the apostles and elders of the Christian church, and by the approbation of the Holy Ghost, we see circumcision put down, and no substitute proposed in its room."

The question considered in this council had no reference to the substitution of a rite in the place of circumcision, for this had already been done by the great Founder of Christianity, but to the abandonment of circumcision and the Mosaic ceremonial law. For, while the apostles were giving

the brethren an account of the "conversion of the Gentiles" —observe, the people converted are Gentiles—then, "certain *Pharisees*, which believed, rose up, and said, that it was needful to circumcise, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." The question then, is concerning "circumcision and keeping the law of Moses." The council decided, that the law of Moses and circumcision were no longer binding on mankind, Jew or Gentile. What then? Why, ye Gentiles obey the *gospel of Christ*, which we have preached to you. But what had the apostles preached to these Gentile converts? Certainly nothing else than the doctrines contained in the great commission, viz. "He that believeth and is *baptized* shall be saved," &c.; which they had preached *before* this council met, and of course, having previously explained to them the *nature* and *design* of baptism, no further instruction on this subject was necessary. The Pharisees wished to *add* "circumcision." All that was necessary for the apostles to do was to put down circumcision, which they did, and sent letters accordingly to their converts, "which when they had read, they rejoiced for consolation." The question was not concerning the truth of Christianity, but whether Judaism should be added to it. The apostolic council decide that Christianity answers without Judaism, and therefore baptism will answer without circumcision. They had already explained and proved Christianity, and all that now remained was to confirm them in the faith. And so they were commanded to "abstain from all meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled," &c.; and Judas and Silas, who are sent unto them, "exhort the brethren with many words, and *confirm* them." Also Paul and Silas go "through Syria and Cilicia (the very places to which the council wrote the decision above,) *confirming* the churches"—that is, establishing them in the doctrines of Christianity, so that though baptism was

not mentioned in the decision of the council, it is most probable it was repeated in the preaching of the apostles. Indeed, the fact that these Gentile converts had been baptized, and now desired circumcision, is strong presumptive proof that the apostles considered baptism in the place of circumcision. Had these Gentile converts been circumcised as well as baptized, then the argument would have been clear and strong that baptism was not substituted for circumcision; and therefore, had the decision of the council been that these persons should be circumcised, we must have yielded the point to our Baptist brethren. But the decision of the council in putting down circumcision, most clearly shows that the apostles and elders, "with the approbation of the Holy Ghost," considered baptism, already administered to these converts, as sufficient, and consequently substituted in the place of circumcision. But finally, the question to be decided by this council was not respecting infant circumcision, but the circumcision of *adult believing Gentiles.* Had the question of infant circumcision been before the council, then very properly the subject of baptism would have been considered with reference to infants, and the necessary decision transmitted to remove any doubts that existed in the minds of the Gentiles on this subject.

Fifthly. "If circumcision and baptism were the same thing, why was baptism administered to persons who had been previously circumcised?"[2]

[1st.] It is not contended, that they are the same thing.

[2d.] Yet the fact, that persons were baptized who had been circumcised, is positive proof that circumcision was not considered by the apostles as initiatory into the Christian church, and hence baptism was administered in its place If the objection has reference to John's baptism, a sufficient

[2] Jewett, p. 69.

reply, already given, is, that John came not to abolish Jewish rites, and therefore his baptism referred to the Christian dispensation about to be opened.

Sixthly. "If baptism be substituted for circumcision, will it not of necessity follow, that *all servants*, 'born in the house or bought with money,' must be baptized on the faith of the master?"[3] Not of necessity in all cases.

[1st.] All *children*, "bought with money or born in the house," ought to be baptized, and it has been done, and still is done, by all who properly regard their duty.

[2d.] As it respects *adult* servants, however, it is different. Such, under the more enlarged dispensation of the gospel, can be baptized on their faith alone, for the Christian dispensation is wholly spiritual.

Seventhly. The identity of the Jewish and Christian dispensations in their *spiritual* bearing is denied, on the ground that the "one, by its constitution, included carnal members; the other, by its constitution, admits spiritual members only."[4] This is a fatal mistake. The Jewish dispensation was spiritual as well as carnal, or how could any of the Jews have been saved? If none but spiritual members can be saved, and the Jewish dispensation included none but carnal members, then Moses and Aaron and David, and all the prophets, with all the members of the Jewish church, lived and died without hope! If the Jewish believer was saved under a carnal dispensation, it must have been through some typical reference had to the future confirmatory sacrifice of Christ, which gave the Jewish dispensation all its spirituality and saving efficacy. And so Paul declares to the Judaizing Galatians, that it is not different from the Christian dispensation in its spiritual meaning. "I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into

[3] Jewett, p. 70.

[4] Ibid. p. 71.

the grace of Christ, unto another gospel, *which is not another*," in its spiritual meaning, and differs only in its external economy. Of course then the spiritual design of circumcision, under the Jewish dispensation, corresponds to the spiritual design of baptism, under the Christian dispensation; and therefore the outward signs must represent each other, so that on the abolition of the one, the other must take its place.

Finally. "Circumcision was a mark of national distinction." Granted; but it was more; it was a mark of spiritual distinction. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Hereby the Jews are recognised, in the highest sense, as the spiritual children of God. In a similar manner, baptism sets forth this distinction under the Christian dispensation. And therefore when the Galatians desired to return to Judaism, the apostle informs them that "if they should be circumcised, Christ should profit them nothing," since, "as many of them as had been baptized into Christ, had put on Christ." That is, a profession of religion, under the Christian dispensation, is made by baptism, and not by circumcision; and hence baptism distinguishes the people of God from the men of the world, in the same manner that circumcision distinguished the Jews, "as the people of God," from the surrounding heathen nations.

To sum up our reply to the objection under consideration: —It is admitted, that there are points of difference between circumcision and baptism, and that there is not in every respect a perfect resemblance between them. But it does not follow therefore that one is not put in the place of the other. All that is required to establish a general agreement between them is, that the principle of both is the same, that the main object of both is the same, that the same sacramental end is accomplished. The nature of prayer, not the form, is essential. There are certain points of dissimilarity

between the ancient Jewish passover and the Lord's supper, and yet the principle of both is the same, and the latter is substituted in the place of the former. There are circumstantial differences between the ancient Levitical priests and gospel ministers, and yet the latter take the place of the former. There are certain very prominent circumstantial differences between the beautiful simplicity of Christian worship and the gorgeous services of the ancient Jewish temple, and yet the latter are set aside by the former. In civil matters old laws may be repealed, and new ones enacted, and yet the main objects of the former may be retained under the latter, and thus the latter be properly regarded as substituted in the place of the former.

4. "Christ was baptized in adult age; and we ought herein to follow his example."

(1.) John did not begin to baptize till Christ was of adult age.

(2.) Then all Christians should not be baptized till they are *thirty* years of age, for it was at that age Christ was baptized.

(3.) The same objection must be in force against infant circumcision, since Abraham was not circumcised till he was of adult age.

(4.) Christ was initiated into the Jewish Church in infancy by circumcision. And lastly, Christ's baptism was a solemn initiation into the priest's office, which could not legally have occurred at an earlier age; and hence the *period* of life at which Christ was baptized forms no objection to *infant* baptism.

5. "Our children are with us in the spiritual church." Very true; and for *that very reason*, they have just as good a title to the formal recognition of this great fact, as you had when you believed. You admit, that dying in infancy, they are entitled to all blessings of the spiritual church in time

and eternity; surely then, living, they have equally as good a title to all the privileges of the external church, which we now enjoy through baptism.

6. "But if they die in infancy without baptism, they will be saved." And well it is so. The adult believer also, if no opportunity to be baptized occur, will be saved, as in the case of the dying thief on the cross; and so would the infant Jew have been saved, had he died in infancy without circumcision, and yet he was circumcised, and being circumcised, when he became capable of enjoying the privileges of the Jewish Church, he was recognised as legally entitled to them. As in the case of the unbaptized believing adult, baptism is administered with reference not only to present character, but future rights and obligations, so in the case of infant baptism, it is administered with reference to the present character, and future rights and obligations of the infant.

7. "Baptism does not make the infant a Christian."

Here we are agreed. We do not believe in baptismal regeneration. The objection is as good against adult baptism as against infant baptism. The adult believer is no more justified after his baptism than he was before his baptism. In neither case is the heart changed by baptism, and hence the inefficacy of baptism to change the heart is no argument against infant baptism.

8. "Baptism administered to infants is not binding, since it is necessarily administered without the exercise of volition on the part of the child." We shall consider this objection at some length.

First. Baptism does not *originate* obligation, but implies obligation already existing, founded upon God's original right to the child dying in infancy, and to his obedience, should he arrive at responsible age. The validity of infant baptism does not depend upon the volition of the subject,

but the divinity of its origin, and corresponding propriety in its administration. Infant baptism has been proved to be an institution perpetuated by Christ, and hence the adult who was baptized in infancy, has no right to exercise a private judgment in opposition to a matter sanctioned and enjoined by the word of God, as the standard of conscience and moral liberty. The rights of private judgment are no more invaded in the administration of baptism in infancy, than in the inculcation of moral truths in infant education by the parent. The doctrines taught at an early age furnish the standard of private judgment, and the child is hereby brought under moral obligation; and hence the adult, baptized in infancy, has no more right, upon the ground of moral duty, to discard his infant baptism, than he has to violate the obligations of his early education. Infant baptism presupposes the absence of right in the infant to private judgment, and hence cannot be regarded as contrary to any inherent and inalienable right. The infant has no inalienable right to remain till he can choose a standard of private judgment for himself, nor can the parent innocently neglect his religious education during the immaturity of his reason, and infancy of his moral powers. The objection founded upon the imagined right of infants to private judgment is as much in force against applying any system of sound morals in educating children, as it is against administering baptism to infants: if it be usurpation in the latter case, it is in the former. Obligation is *prior* to the *act* of volition. Choice does not originate obligation, but obligation is to determine choice. Baptism recognises obligation existing prior to the act of volition, and imposes on the subject the duty of discharging the original obligation, according to the principles and truths of the gospel. That is, without baptism, the infant is under obligation when it grows up to lead a holy life —this obligation exists independently of baptism—baptism

merely recognises this obligation in a public, formal, and solemn manner, importing, independently of personal choice, the moral obligation of the infant under the gospel administration. The sense of responsibility lies at the foundation of the human mind; consequently God can justly and properly impose responsibility on the infant, independently of his concurrence and volition. Thus, baptism implies obligation not found in consent, but prior to the exercise of the will, and hence baptism implies no violation of the right of private judgment, and therefore, in the case of infants, is not contrary to the word of God. And let it be observed also, that the obligations of the parents to attend to the baptism of their children is prior to, and independent of, the undeveloped consent of the children.

Again, if the exercise of volition is necessary to originate and impose obligation, then infants are not bound by human laws, nor by parental obligation, nor by the authority of God himself, since infants never sanctioned the social compact, nor chose their parents, nor consented to the authority of God, and thus by a single bold stroke, all obligations to parents, to guardians, to masters, to the social compact, and to God himself, are absolutely annulled for ever; and every will in the universe, upon the same principle, may assume with impunity, absolute and eternal independence. "Man is really born, fostered, taught, and governed, with little or no regard to his own will. And even in respect to civil government, the greater part of the circumstances of a man's condition *exist before him*, and *independently* of him: for example, the institutions, the laws, the customs, the character of the nation in which he must share, and by which his own habits and actions are mainly regulated. And his relation to the government being determined by these external facts, and not by himself, it seems to be a groundless and inapplicable fiction, to speak of that relation as founded upon

a contract, to which he is a party." Whewell's Elements of Morality, vol. ii. 216, 217.

Secondly. Unconsciousness does not divest the infant of a saving interest in the atonement of Christ, unless you can prove that his interest depends upon the knowledge of the design of the atonement, reliance upon it, and admission of moral obligation; in which case, you would make infant salvation conditional, and hence infant damnation inevitable. Ignorance does not invalidate the title of the infant to salvation, and hence can be no obstacle to his baptism. A Jewish writer observes, "One may privilege a person, though he is incapable of knowing it; but one ought not to disprivilege a person without his knowledge"—as the Baptists do in withholding baptism from infants on account of their unconsciousness, or inability to exercise intelligible volition.

Thirdly. Children can enter into covenant with the Lord. "Ye stand all of you this day before the Lord your God—*your little ones*, TO ENTER INTO COVENANT WITH THE LORD YOUR GOD."[5] "Read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law to the LITTLE ONES."[6] The covenant was made with infants to be applicable in adult years. "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not a covenant with our fathers, but with US, *even* US, *who are all of us here alive this day.*"[7] This covenant had been made with these adult Jews *thirty* years before this time, when many of them at least were infants. Such is the arrangement of Infinite Wisdom, whereby infants are made passive parties to the covenant, and is a conclusive and impressive refutation of the objection under consideration. And so Gregory Nazianzen says, "Hast thou an infant child? *Let him be dedicated from his*

[5] Deut. xxix. 11, 12. [6] Josh. viii. 34, 35. [7] Deut. v. 2, 3.

cradle"—enter into covenant with God, which can be done formally in no other way than by baptism. Under the Mosaic dispensation, children, at the age of three years, were considered capable of covenanting with God, and were admitted as members of the Jewish church. At three years of age, Samuel "worshipped the Lord."[8] Timothy, from his *infancy*, knew the Holy Scriptures.[9] Would the apostles have refused baptism to such children as these? Should we refuse baptism to such children?

Fourthly. The same objection might have been urged as forcibly against circumcision under the Jewish dispensation, and yet would not have been sufficient to cause its neglect.

We may consider this objection in another form. "Persons baptized in infancy, in after years may become dissatisfied with their baptism." And so persons baptized in adult years sometimes become dissatisfied with their baptism. Abstract dissatisfaction is no more valid in one case than in the other. Besides, the *mere possibility* that the adult will become dissatisfied with his infant baptism, is far from being sufficient to set aside the whole weight of testimony in favor of infant baptism—a weight of testimony which enforces the most solemn duty—and the possibility of dissatisfaction can never lessen, much less release wholly from obligation. But let us carefully consider the reasons by which the adult justifies his dissatisfaction. His doubts may be thus stated: "I have been baptized in infancy, and though I believe the mode to be wholly non-essential, yet as I had no hand in my baptism, I consider it invalid. And yet if I could sanction and adopt my infant baptism as my act, I would give up all my scruples at once on the subject." The whole statement then of the objection is this:—In order to the validity of baptism, it is assumed, that the subject must be

[8] 1 Sam. i. 28; ii. 11.

[9] 2 Tim. iii. 15.

conscious of its administration, understand its nature, design, and obligation, and with such knowledge, he for himself, must voluntarily submit to it, otherwise it is not his act, and hence is not valid. As this objection is one of a most perplexing nature to some minds, we shall endeavor satisfactorily to analyze and answer it.

In infancy you were entitled to all the blessings of salvation on the ground of Christ's atonement, and hence at that time you were unconditionally entitled to baptism, the outward sign and seal of such title. But you forfeited your title to salvation subsequently by disobedience and unbelief; and yet a short time since, you believed in Christ, and were pardoned, and so *recovered* the title to salvation which you had unconditionally in infancy; and *which your infant baptism set forth.* Why then desire to have your baptism repeated? Take the case of conversion, baptism, and backsliding in the adult—of one converted, say, at twenty years of age, who continues faithful, backslides at thirty years, continues a backslider five years, then repents, believes, and is pardoned again—what now are his views, and what is his duty respecting baptism? Why he goes back to his former justified and happy state, and sanctions his baptism administered fifteen years before. And so in infancy you were baptized, because you had then an unconditional title to salvation—in adult years you forfeited this title, and remained an alien from the commonwealth of Israel to the present time; but now you have believed, and so recovered the title you had in infancy, and which was set forth by baptism in infancy. The very same relation which the reclaimed backslider sustains to his adult baptism, the adult believer sustains to his infant baptism. Alas, that you should complain of a divine privilege, and strive to invalidate a right you possessed independently of your knowledge! But yet you can obtain your wish in this matter. You can

have just as much hand in your infant baptism as you could have had in your adult baptism. This we shall now set forth. 1. *Why baptism should not be repeated.* In baptism, the subject assumes all the obligations connected with the everlasting covenant. The violation of the laws of the kingdom of God after baptism does not annul the obligations assumed in baptism. Why then *repeat* baptism? The import of baptism extends through life, and is co-extensive with the time, and corresponds to the character of probation. When a man is naturalized, and takes the oath of allegiance, he thereby pledges himself to keep the laws of the land so long as he lives in the country: the infraction of the laws of the land in any instance does not annul the obligations involved in the oath of allegiance—his obligations still continue, and hence the oath of allegiance need not to be repeated.[10] Baptism is a federal act, as circumcision was, and imposes obligation to keep the whole of the law. When the law was violated, God was reconciled, not by the repetition of circumcision, but by appointed sacrifices. So baptism, as a badge of profession, as a seal of the covenant, as a federal act, brings the subject under obligation to keep the whole law of grace, whereby he becomes a debtor to the law to the end of life: and whenever sin is committed, the great sacrifice offered on Calvary, by faith becomes the procuring cause of forgiveness and spiritual blessings. Circumcision was never repeated to a Jew. The ceremony of initiation was never repeated to a proselyte. 2. In baptism God pledges himself to bestow upon the subject, continuing faithful, all the blessings of his everlasting covenant, in

[10] It may be observed, if baptism be the condition of remission of sins, then, in every case of actual sin, baptism should be repeated; but from the character of baptism as above, it ought not to be repeated, which is fatal to the dogma of baptismal regeneration.

time and eternity. Baptism is the standing seal on the part of God of the whole covenant of grace, having a prospective reference to the whole duty of man, during the time of his probation, so that a repetition of it would not only be unnecessary, but profane. In the case of backsliding, the subject of baptism, upon repentance and faith, *returns* to the discharge of his obligations assumed in baptism, and consequently there is no more necessity for rebaptism in his case than if he had continued faithful from the moment of his conversion and baptism. The faithfulness of the subject is a matter to be tested, and time and opportunity must be granted him, and hence a repetition of baptism could but repeat a pledge already given, and which had not yet been consummated. Baptism has reference to future obligation and the final reward; rebaptism can have no other reference, and hence rebaptism implies insincerity on the part of man, and want of faithfulness on the part of God. The advocates for rebaptism are led into error by not perceiving the *extent* of obligations involved in baptism—obligations extending through *the whole life*, on the part of man, connected with a standing title to *the final reward* on the part of God: and so for a double reason, baptism ought not to be repeated. Such is the character of infant baptism. 3. A sign is designed to prefigure some future thing, as is proved by reference to the nature of the Jewish dispensation. Thus, baptism in infancy is designed to set forth the child's right to salvation, and in case of death in infancy, or conversion in after years, to set forth spiritual baptism, and consequent right to all the blessings of the atonement and privileges of the church. All then in this case that I have to do, is to go back and *sanction* my baptism administered in infancy —and this is my duty, as well as a privilege. I could do no more than *sanction* baptism administered in adult age. 4. There are two rights set forth in infant baptism—that of

the infant to all the blessings of the atonement, and that of Christ to the infant. These rights are acknowledged at the time of baptism by the church, and subsequently the subject himself asserts his right to the blessings of the atonement, and acknowledges the right of Christ to him. In passing from childhood through life, there is a point where unconditional salvation ends, and moral responsibility begins. At *this* point, or subsequently, the child, or adult, may *sanction*, *confirm*, and *continue*, and *should do* so by his own personal faith, his right set forth in infant baptism. Placed upon his own responsibility, all that is necessary for the confirmation and continuation of his original right is, that he heartily subscribe to the conditions of his baptism, acknowledge Christ's right to him, embrace his right to Christ, and continue by faith and good works what he unconditionally possessed in infancy. I can just as fully and satisfactorily sanction a right setting forth my title to Christ, and his to me, *after*, as before, or at its administration—yea, the more so, it seems to me, *after* its administration than before, since by my *faith*, *I voluntarily continue* a right possessed unconditionally in infancy. 5. The time of sanctioning baptism is non-essential. A freeborn infant is entitled to all the blessings of freedom. These blessings he may forfeit in subsequent life, by a violation of the law which secures them, or he may appropriate and enjoy them by obedience to the law: thus what he enjoyed in infancy unconditionally, he now enjoys conditionally. You are a freeman. Will any one say, that you are any more entitled to freedom *now* than when in infancy? You were free by *relation*, and have *continued* your right to freedom by the discharge of the necessary conditions. And yet you are no more free to-day than you were in infancy. In a similar manner, in view of the atonement of Christ, you were born unconditionally entitled to all the blessings of salvation.

which title you can confirm by subsequent faith and obedience, or forfeit by actual transgression. Baptism was the outward sign and seal of your title in infancy; faith is the condition of your title in adult age; and hence faith confirms the design of baptism administered in infancy, while you voluntarily sanction the obligations of the rite administered at that time. As a freeman, going into another country, does not forfeit his original title to the privileges of his native land, but may return at any time, and be recognised as a free citizen, without the usual preliminaries of naturalization; so the adult, baptized in infancy, by hearty repentance and faith, may sanction his infant baptism, recover his original title, and enjoy all the blessings of salvation to which he was unconditionally entitled in infancy. Thus, all along the same character is maintained, and hence the time of baptism is non-essential; only it should be administered as soon as possible.

A second illustration may be drawn from the atonement of Christ, which had a retrospective as well as prospective reference. The old world looked *forward* to it, we look *back* to it: in both cases it is equally efficacious—extending salvation to us this day, more than eighteen hundred years after it was made, as well as to those who looked foward to it in faith more than four thousand years *before* the coming of Christ. *Faith* in the atonement, and not the *time* of the atonement, is the *condition* of salvation. And so the *time* of baptism is non-essential; the will of the adult believer may sanction baptism administered in infancy, as well as in adult age, as the case may be, with equal validity. And so we conclude, *the adult believer, who has been baptized in infancy, may look back to his infant baptism, and sanction it as his baptism, acknowledge and subscribe to the divine proprietorship therein set forth, confirm and continue his title to all the covenanted mercies of the atonement, of*

which baptism was the sign and seal in infancy, and thus justly and safely consider himself legally and properly initiated into the external and spiritual church of Christ, under the Christian dispensation, as the adult Jew regarded himself in church relations under the Jewish dispensation, in view of his infant circumcision, and subsequent faith and obedience. The infant is unconditionally entitled to baptism: the adult believer *continues* that right by faith: hence the adult believer, baptized in infancy, has a right to church membership, and all the privileges, institutions, and blessings of the external and spiritual church of Christ without the necessity of repeated baptism. The whole question then turns upon the validity of infant baptism. If you believe in its validity, in the very nature of things, you could not sanction it at the time it was administered. Do you deny the validity of infant baptism? No. Then your scruples are groundless, and the objection must be relinquished.

Children circumcised under the Mosaic dispensation were thereby formally and solemnly obligated from the earliest responsible period, to observe the whole law, moral, ceremonial, and civil: "Every man," says the apostle, "that is circumcised is a debtor to the whole law." So children baptized under the Christian dispensation are formally and solemnly obligated, from the earliest responsible period, to observe the whole law, moral and evangelical: and this obligation, as in the case of the infant Jew, extends through all subsequent life. And children under the Christian dispensation have no more right to say whether they will be placed under such obligation, than the infant Jew had, under the Mosaic dispensation. To deny this, is to reflect upon the wisdom and sovereignty of God in the institution of circumcision. "Circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law"—but infants could not keep the law; therefore they were to keep the law when they arrived at a re-

sponsible age: so in the case of baptism. "But if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision"—but infants could not break the law; therefore the law was to be in force when they arrived at a responsible age: so in the case of baptism. Baptism in infancy as much refers to obligation in subsequent life as circumcision did in the case of the infant Jew. Besides, infants are born parties to the everlasting covenant, and therefore their consent to become a party to it is not required of them—they are that already. Moreover, baptism does not involve *new* obligations, but is a formal recognition of obligations already existing; not a solitary duty is implied in baptism which did not antecedently exist. The principle on which infants are bound in covenant with God, without their knowledge or consent, we repeat, is thus set forth in the Scriptures: "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your *little ones*, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water; that thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day; that he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath, but with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, *and also* WITH HIM THAT IS NOT HERE WITH US THIS DAY." Deut. xxix. 10–15. "Little ones," and "him that standeth here with us this day"—the present generation, from the youngest to the oldest member of it. "And also him that is not here with us this day"—all future generations. Now if the supremacy and authority of Jehovah can be denied, and

controversy with him be successfully maintained, and obligation to him annulled, then the doctrine of infant baptism may be cancelled; otherwise, as the seal of the everlasting covenant, it may as properly be conferred upon infants, under the Christian dispensation, without their knowledge or consent, as circumcision, the seal of the everlasting covenant, was conferred upon infants, under the Jewish dispensation, without their knowledge or consent. Hannah dedicated her son to God without his knowledge or consent, and God accepted the act. I will go further. This objection is infidelity in its most arrogant form. It cancels all obligation of man to God. It is opposed, as we have stated, to the religious education of children without their consent. It annuls the obligation of parents to instruct their children, and the obligation of children to obey their parents. It invests the free agency of man with right to pursue with impunity a life polluted with every vice in the catalogue of crime. If followed out to its legitimate results, it would revolutionize the government of God throughout his moral universe. If followed out to its legitimate results, it would justify treason and rebellion, and overturn every civil government on earth. Responsibility no more depends upon consent in the infant, than creation does, for in the nature of things consent is impossible. He is created a rational being, and therefore responsibility is essentially involved in his creation, and baptism formally recognises this responsibility. Consequently the essential constitution of mind must be revolutionized, the import of moral powers cancelled, the authority of moral law invalidated, and the supremacy of God repudiated, before the appropriateness and importance of infant baptism can be denied.

CHAPTER IV.

OBJECTIONS OF A COLLATERAL CHARACTER CONSIDERED

THERE are several objections of a collateral character, which we will now consider.

1. "Infants of unbelieving parents ought not to be baptized, because there is none on whose faith baptism can be administered."

First. The child has a right to baptism, not in view of the faith of the parents, but in view of the *atonement* of Christ, since the same ground that entitles him to salvation, entitles him also to baptism.

Secondly. The evangelical form of the covenant has nothing in it of a temporal character, as in the Abrahamic form of the covenant. Under the Jewish dispensation it was indispensable that the parents should be *Jews* in order to entitle children to circumcision, because the covenant partly referred to *temporal* blessings, embraced in the land of Canaan. In view of specific *temporal*, as well as spiritual blessings promised, none but the children of Jews were circumcised, while those who became proselytes were circumcised in view of the *spiritual* advantages alone connected with the Jewish dispensation. But under the gospel dispensation, this temporal restriction or limitation is removed, and consequently, all the children in the world, and in all periods of time, are equally entitled to baptism, since nothing but *spiritual* blessings are set forth by baptism, and spiritual blessings are unconditionally obtained for all infants by the atonement of Christ.

2. "Both parents do not sanction infant baptism—ought the approving parent to have the child baptized?"

First. Abstract objections or sanctions of either or both of the parents no more affect the child's right to baptism, than they do his right to salvation, and Christ's right to the child in baptism. These rights of the infant and of Christ are evangelical in their nature, and therefore independent of *natural* relations. If the child be denied right to baptism, it must be on the ground of Adam's offence, as Adam was the federal representative of the human race under the paradisaical law; but the condemnation involved in Adam's transgression, which must otherwise have deprived infants of salvation as well as baptism, has been removed by the atonement of Christ in the case of all infants, and so the title of all infants to both salvation and baptism has been hereby secured and established for ever. That is, the only *natural* relation that could have deprived children of baptism is that which they sustain *legally* to Adam; but this relation has been graciously adjusted by the atonement of Christ, whereby every child sustains such a *moral, gracious* relation to God through Christ, as involves in it a title to baptism. It is this relation through Christ, the second Adam from heaven, that gives the children of unbelieving parents a title to baptism. Hence, the approval or disapproval of one or both of the parents cannot annul the absolute and independent right of the child to baptism.

Secondly. The objection of either or both the parents to the circumcision of their children, under the Jewish dispensation, could not in the least respect affect their right to circumcision. Such opposition would have incurred the double guilt of rebellion against God, and great injury to the child. Under the Christian dispensation therefore, and for stronger reasons, the opposition or sanction of either or

both of the parents, in no manner affects the real right of their children to baptism.

3. "If infants ought to be baptized, they ought also to be admitted to the Lord's supper."

As the passover has been succeeded by the Lord's supper, and circumcision by baptism; and as those who were circumcised in infancy were not admitted to the passover till they were able to understand its signification; so under the Christian dispensation, those who are baptized in infancy have no right to the holy eucharist till they are able to understand its meaning. The testimony on this subject is abundant. "The passover, which has now been succeeded by the sacred supper, did not admit guests of all descriptions promiscuously; but was rightly eaten only by those who were of sufficient age to inquire into its signification."[1] "The law forbids the son to eat of the sacrifice before he has come to the temple, and there presented an offering to God."[2] "Till a child was twelve years old, he was not obliged to go to Jerusalem at the time of the passover."[3] And so Poole: "Children at the age of twelve years were brought by their parents to the temple; and from that time they began to eat of the passover and other sacrifices." Bishop Patrick observes, "When children were twelve years old, their parents were bound to bring them to the temple at the passover, where seeing what was done, they would be led to inquire, What mean ye by these things?" And so Dr. Doddridge: "The males were not brought to the temple till they were twelve years of age." And Dr. Gill, a learned Baptist writer, bears testimony: "According to the maxims of the Jews, persons were not obliged to the duties of the law, or subject to its penalties in case of non-performance,

[1] Calvin's Inst. b. iv., c. 16. sec. 30. [2] Josephus, lib. xii., c. 4.
[3] Stackhouse. Hist. Bible, book viii., c. 1.

until they were, a female, at the age of twelve years and one day, and a male, at the age of thirteen years and one day."[4] And so Luke says of Jesus, "And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, *after the custom of the feast.*" Thus, as infants under the Jewish dispensation were not entitled to participation in the passover, in view of their circumcision, independently of other considerations, so under the Christian dispensation, infants are not invested with right to partake of the Lord's supper, solely in view of their baptism. Right to the holy eucharist is founded upon faith and a new creature; but baptism, in the case of infants, is a privilege founded solely upon the atonement of Christ, without faith and a new nature, yet prospectively referring to the obligations of faith and the duty of seeking a new nature. The Lord's supper is to be taken by those only who can "discern the Lord's body" therein by faith, with a grateful "remembrance" of his atoning sacrifice, and an humble commemoration of his "death till he come again." With regard to baptism, no distinction of age is made in the Scriptures; but with respect to the participation of the Lord's supper, the distinction above is clearly made. There is such an essential difference between these two sacraments in their nature and design, that in the case of infants there is no connection between them. If therefore the objection is based upon *analogy*, it is overthrown at once by the considerations, that children under the Jewish dispensation did not partake of the passover till they were twelve years old; that a proper understanding, with faith and gratitude, is indispensable to the proper observance of the holy eucharist; and that, under the Christian dispensation, many children, both male and female, understand the meaning, and partake of the sacrament in the proper spirit *before* they are twelve years of age.

[4] Comment on Luke ii. 42.

In other words, the right of baptized infants to the Lord's supper is *prospective*, and is involved in the gradation of capacity for the enjoyment of church privileges, and the blessings of the everlasting covenant. As in civil society, the constitution and laws guarantee to infants a certain and adequate amount of privilege, and this amount is enlarged when they arrive at a lawful age; so under the covenant of grace, when they arrive at a suitable age, and attain the requisite capacity to "examine themselves and discern the Lord's body," and confirm their original right by faith and a corresponding life, they are admitted to the enjoyment of additional privileges in the church of God, under the covenant of grace. It is admitted, "that infant communion is an ancient practice of the church." Of course then infant baptism is an ancient practice too, and must have been prior to the practice of infant communion, as the Baptists themselves would not permit any one to commune who had not been baptized. But the practice of infant communion never became *universal*—was not in existence in the days of Polycarp, Irenæus, Justin Martyr, and Origen—and was always opposed, till it was finally put down in the West, where it originated. Any one who will examine church history, will find the time when infant communion was commenced, how it was opposed by the church, and when it was abandoned by the churches that began it—*but no such origin can be found for infant baptism, and it has never been abandoned.*

4. "Infant baptism is a part of popery, and is the basis of national churches and worldly establishments. Dr. Gill called infant baptism the main ground and pillar of popery, and a great number of Baptists are of the same opinion."[5]

In the first place, infant baptism was practised several hundred years before popery existed. Secondly, it is prac-

[5] Robinson's Hist. of Baptism, p. 408.

tised in those churches that are not and never were under the dominion of the pope. Thirdly, infant baptism was practised long before national churches existed in the world Fourthly, *civil* law gives being to national churches, and national establishments depend altogether upon other causes for their origin and continuance than the one pretended in this objection. Fifthly, the union of the church and state, in all instances, is to be ascribed to the spirit of *compromise.* Sixthly, the abolition of the practice of infant baptism would not break up the foundation of national churches, nor prevent their origin in future.

5. "Infant baptism serves greatly to corrupt the church." Facts refute the unjust allegation. Go examine the pædobastist churches throughout Christendom, and the children of pædobaptist parents, from early age through all periods of subsequent life, will be found inferior in no respect to the children of Baptist parents. In every relation in society, personal, social, and civil; in every relation in the church, ordinary or official; in every period of life, childhood, youth, manhood, old age; in every pursuit of honor, usefulness, and eminence; and in every commendable and noble enterprise that renders the present age conspicuous, the pædobaptist churches are in no respect behind their Baptist brethren. It is a matter of common observation, that in powerful and extensive revivals in pædobaptist churches, very few persons are baptized—unless they are of Baptist parentage. Indeed it is an obvious and most remarkable fact, that revivals generally embrace the youthful portions of the church, and the great majority of children and youth converted in revivals are those who have been baptized in infancy—have these been corrupted by their baptism? Properly instructed by pious parents, and piously educated at the altars of the church, as soon as they arrive at the proper age, God, it seems, expressive of his approval

of their dedication to him in early baptism, receives them by faith into his spiritual church, as his "faithful and elect children." And I may inquire just here, is the same large proportion of children of Baptist parents, at the same early age, in these days brought into the fold of Christ? Or are the great majority converted in adult age? And even then, are they not, in large proportion, converted in the pædobaptist churches, and received finally among their old friends and parents in the Baptist Church? Are any corruptions that may be found in the pædobaptist churches to be traced to infant baptism? Then all corruptions found in the Baptist church, such as exclusive immersion, restricted or close communion, bigotry, and any false doctrine, are to be traced to opposition to infant baptism. The argument is as good in one case as in the other; indeed, upon a careful analysis, the argument will be found to be wholly false in the former case, but to a great extent strictly true in the latter case.

It is admitted that infant baptism has been abused, but the fault lies in the conduct of its advocates, and its opponents have taken advantage of the abuse. But it is easy to see that there is an essential difference between the doctrine of baptism and the abuse of the doctrine. If the doctrine were properly appreciated and observed, incalculable blessings would follow in the conversion of thousands of our young people, and but few opponents would arise against it. The neglect, indifference, and inconsistency of its friends, have done incalculably more to discredit it, than all the arguments, sarcasms, and opposition of its enemies have accomplished against it. Whatever of abuse and corruption that may arise from infant baptism, is not to be ascribed to the intrinsic nature of the ordinance, but to the depravity of man. The other sacrament has been more abused than infant baptism, and adult baptism itself, in the Baptist church as well as elsewhere, has, no doubt, frequently been

perverted to the purposes of ambition and selfishness; and yet all this does not destroy the general principle and validity of the sacrament.

6. "But if all parents should have their children baptized, the whole world would be introduced into the church." True, and happy world, when all the children can be brought up in the church, under the moral and holy obligations of baptism administered in infancy. There is no better place under heaven in which to instruct the children than the church of Christ. But if the objection presupposes that all persons baptized in infancy have a right to association with the church, and are recognised as having this right in subsequent life, notwithstanding the rebellion of subsequent life, and the violation of the obligations contained in infant baptism, it proceeds upon false premises. This right may be forfeited by subsequent actual transgression, and hence none who were baptized in infancy are admitted into the church in adult age, unless they give proof that they have continued or recovered their original title by repentance, faith, and good works.

7. "If infants are members of the church by birth, and are not baptized, they forfeit their membership; and hence, on the pædobaptist principle, all unbaptized children are excluded from the church of God and therefore lost."

It is not maintained that infants are members of the spiritual church "by faith," but by virtue of the vicarious death of Christ, and this membership cannot be forfeited by the neglect of baptism in their case. Baptism recognises this right as already existing, and the right still exists though they remain unbaptized, and consequently, dying in infancy, they are not "lost." The neglect of their baptism on the part of parents does not dissolve their connection with Christ's atonement, and association with Christ's spiritual church. It is true, if they are not baptized, they do forfeit

their membership in Christ's visible church, and their right to external church privileges. So the uncircumcised infant Jew, by the command of God "*should be cut off from his people,*" that is, "*cut off,*" from the external, visible church —forfeit right to participate in the passover and other ceremonial exercises of the Jewish church; but dying in infancy he was not thereby lost. The child of David died before he was eight days old, and therefore before he was circumcised, and yet he was not lost, for David, in his grief and fasting, was comforted with the belief, that he "should go to him." The penitent thief on the cross was saved, though he was never baptized, and was never associated with Christ's visible church. If the objection be admitted, every unbaptized believer must be lost. The objection proceeds upon the ground that baptism is saving in its nature, or indispensable to salvation. This is the old Romish heresy of baptismal regeneration.

8. "If children of Christian parents are born members of the church, they have no need of baptism—they belong to the church without it, and it becomes a work of supererogation."

In the first place, because children are born members of the church, *is the very reason* why they have a right to baptism. The objection admits the very ground on which infants are entitled to baptism. The argument, if admitted, and applied to the case of adult believers, would render their baptism needless, or as "a work of supererogation." "If adult believers are born members of the church, they have no need of baptism, they belong to the church without it, and it becomes a work of supererogation." Now "he that *believeth* that Jesus is the Christ is *born* of God," and is at once united with the spiritual church; and *because* he is thus born a member of the church, he is entitled to baptism. But if because the infant "belongs to the church

without" baptism, there is "no need" of baptism in his case, so because the adult believer "belongs to the church without" baptism, there is "no need" of baptism in his case also—a conclusion that excludes baptism from the Christian dispensation altogether.

Secondly, baptism does not constitute, but recognises and certifies a right already existing: in the case of the infant, it sacramentally certifies a right, already existing, to all the blessings of the everlasting covenant; and in the case of the adult believer, it sacramentally certifies the same thing.

In closing the consideration of the most prominent and important objections ordinarily urged against infant baptism, we are led to the following inferences.

1. *Persons baptized in infancy ought not to be rebaptized in subsequent life.* Fearful parents sometimes say, "That in view of scruples that may arise in the minds of their children in adult age, they think it best to omit baptism in infancy, and leave the whole subject to the management of the children in subsequent life." We say, first, to the parents—*If you do your whole duty in properly instructing the children,* they will never be embarrassed respecting their *infant baptism.* The scrupulous fear that they will not sanction their baptism, and continue their rights set forth in baptism, is not a sufficient ground for the neglect of your duty, and withholding from them their right in this matter—especially, too, since hereby you neglect a duty you owe to Christ and his church. We reply, secondly, to those who have been baptized in infancy, and are now dissatisfied with their baptism—If you will not sanction your infant baptism, and acknowledge its solemn obligations, then you must set it aside; and by so doing you incur a fearful responsibility, for you venture to trifle with one of the sacred institutions of Christianity in its application to infants; and hence incurring as you do such fearful danger, pædo-

baptist ministers are not willing to be involved with you in the matter, and so you must have recourse to ministers of a different belief on the subject, if you must obtain rebaptism. Baptism is the sensible, formal seal of the covenant of grace in all its parts, and has as much a federal import on the part of God as it has on the part of man. Thus, the covenant of grace provides, that sins committed *after* justification, whether in the case of infant or adult justification, shall, upon the exercise of repentance and faith, be forgiven; and baptism is a seal of this promise or feature of the covenant. Hence there is no necessity of rebaptism in the case of a person baptized in infancy or in adult age.

2. *The impropriety of excluding the following persons from the Lord's supper:*—First, the adult believer, who was baptized in infancy, and sanctions his baptism as valid and sufficient, and continues or recovers his original title by justifying faith and obedience. Secondly, the adult believer who was not baptized in infancy, but in adult age. Thirdly, all persons who give satisfactory evidence that they are the children of God, though there has been no opportunity to attend to baptism in their cases. The *mode* of baptism in no respect enters into the question of right or qualification in the premises.

PART V.

Benefits of Infant Baptism, and the Dedication of Children in Baptism a Solemn Duty.

CHAPTER I.

BENEFITS OF INFANT BAPTISM.

I CANNOT close these remarks without mentioning some of the benefits of infant baptism. The question is often proposed by the Baptists, "What benefit, what benefit in infant baptism? What good is derived by unconscious babes in baptism?"

1. It witnesses to the world that the child has a title to salvation, and God's gracious dealings "are declared among the people."

2. It sets forth in a solemn and impressive manner the fact that infants are affected by the fall of Adam, and embraced in the salvation of Christ. It may be replied here, "that infants will be saved without baptism." True, that will be the good fortune of all that die in infancy, notwithstanding the neglect of parents, since God has not made their salvation in any respect, dying in infancy, to depend on the care or neglect of man toward them, but on the meritorious sacrifice of Christ. So the Jewish infant would have been saved, had the parents omitted circumcision—yet the child would have been "cut off from the congregation of the Lord" in a civil and ecclesiastical sense. It is not so

much the child, dying in infancy, that is injured by withholding baptism, as it is God, whose title to that child had not been formally acknowledged; and the child living, whose title according to the everlasting covenant, had not been set forth to the world, in view of his *living* and *arriving at responsible age.* Because the child dying in infancy is saved, is no vindication or excuse for omitting baptism. Thus, though infants, dying in infancy, will be saved without baptism, baptism sets forth the fact, that while they are affected by the fall of Adam, they are embraced in the salvation of Christ, and *living,* and *proving faithful,* are entitled to the blessings of that salvation.

3. They are capable of receiving a blessing at the hands of Christ; for "he laid his hands on them and *blessed* them," though they did not understand what Christ meant when he put his hands upon them. And surely they are capable of receiving some benefit from the *ordinance* of Christ. The covenant of grace is a deed of gift, signed by the blood of Christ, and the New Testament may be considered as his last will and testament. Would a generous father omit the names of his children in a deed or will simply because they were unconscious of its meaning? What good is derived by unconscious babes from the *death* of Christ? Why, the greatest good in the hands of God, namely, "the kingdom of heaven." And shall not baptism, an *ordinance* of Christ, convey to the child some of the benefit of his sacrificial death? What harm is inflicted? What spiritual benefit is withheld by it? What obstacle to early piety, or barrier to an exemplary life, is placed in the way? None whatever. Then *why* all this opposition to infant baptism? No harm ensues, and an ordinance that sets forth the title of the infant to the greatest good, must be connected with important spiritual benefits in its administration.

If any benefit accrues to the adult in baptism, surely some

benefit must accrue to the infant in baptism, who has equal right with the adult to baptism: benefits therefore of the providence of God, of the grace of Christ, and of the operation of the Holy Spirit, must ensue in some sense in the case of infant baptism; and if in any sense, it must be a subject of the highest importance. And consequently all who forbid the little child to receive the ordinance, deserve the rebuke and displeasure of the Lord and the disapprobation of man, since they place a great barrier between the child and the church and the special grace and providence of God. Since Christ has instituted the sacraments as channels of spiritual blessings to the believer, there is no reason why baptism may not be a channel of some spiritual blessing to the infant without faith. Baptism, whether in case of infants or adults, is not a mere form of profession, recognition, and initiation, destitute of all blessings, spiritual, moral, social, and providential; nor does it derive all its excellence simply because it is commanded. No rite, Jewish or Christian, was ever enjoined by command without some blessing intended, certain privileges guaranteed, and effects accompanying and following corresponding to the rite: and such is the essential character and design of baptism. If no privileges, no good effects be connected with baptism, then baptism is a useless ceremony; if any spiritual benefits are connected with baptism, then the infant has as good a right to them without faith as the adult has by faith. Let it be carefully observed, however, that baptism is neither regenerating nor saving. As under the Jewish dispensation neither the covenant, nor its seal, nor its promises, nor its services could save the Jew, without personal faith; so under the Christian dispensation, neither the covenant, nor its sacraments, nor its promises, nor its services can save the baptized infant in subsequent life, without personal

faith. Indeed, the whole system of covenants, seals, and promises is absolutely null without faith.

4. Infant baptism is as profitable as circumcision was under the Jewish dispensation. "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law—for every man that is circumcised is a debtor to the whole law." Circumcision was profitable to the Jew, if in subsequent life he kept the law —if in subsequent life he discharged the obligation imposed upon him in circumcision in infancy. So baptism profiteth, if the infant in subsequent life keep the whole law, moral and evangelical, that is, discharge all the obligations imposed under the gospel. In a word, baptism is as profitable to the infant who discharges in subsequent life all the obligations imposed upon him in baptism, as circumcision was profitable to the infant Jew who in subsequent life kept the whole law, moral, ceremonial, and civil. The profit of circumcision was in keeping the law, and so extended to subsequent life; the profit of baptism is in keeping the law of the gospel, and so extends to subsequent life: hence, there is as much profit in infant baptism as there was in infant circumcision. The former cannot be denied without denying the latter. The argument of the Baptists may be thus stated: "Circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but infants cannot keep the law; therefore their circumcision must be unprofitable." This is rendering a positive institution of God an absolute nullity, which is a reflection upon infinite wisdom. But circumcision is profitable—and the argument of the Baptists is a mere sophism; and so the same argument against infant baptism is a mere sophism.

The Apostle Paul has stated a case in which baptism is unprofitable: "But if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." That is, circumcision was connected with no good or profit to him who

failed to keep the law: so baptism is connected with no profit to him, whether infant or adult, who does not keep the law of the gospel. In this case, the question, What good? may be properly proposed, and the answer is, None at all. That is, if the infant fail to repent, believe, and obey the gospel in subsequent life, his baptism is unprofitable. The error of the Baptists is, the prospective profit of infant baptism is confounded with some supposed present good. The future profit of infant baptism is left out of the question, and so the premises that refer only to the present fall to the ground. But there are certain present benefits connected with infant baptism, which we shall set forth at the proper place. We will only add here, with reference to the benefit of infant baptism, the language of Paul in reply to certain cavillers of circumcision in his day: "*What profit is there of circumcision?* MUCH EVERY WAY; but what if some [who had been circumcised in their childhood] did not [afterward] *believe?* Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?"—cause God to fail to keep his promise with those that believe? "God forbid; yet let God be true, but every man a liar—*for circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law*: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision."

5. Infant baptism is as profitable as adult baptism. Baptism is productive of no good to the adult unless he receive it with faith; it is faith, and faith only, in the adult, that derives any benefit from baptism. That some benefit, we repeat, is connected with infant baptism we have no doubt, because every ordinance of God properly administered must be connected with some spiritual blessing; but whatever this spiritual blessing is, we are assured it is not regeneration, any more in the case of infant baptism than it is in adult baptism. The adult believer in baptism receives the blessing, or "answer of a good conscience," and nothing ad-

ditional only in proportion as he subsequently discharges the conditions implied in baptism: the infant, in the nature of things, cannot receive at the time this blessing, or answer of a good conscience, but in adult age he may for himself sanction his infant baptism, and thus making it his *own*, enjoy the answer of a good conscience, and then, as in the case of the adult, proceed to the discharge of all the conditions implied in infant baptism. There is therefore no more reason why baptism should be denied to the infant, than there is that it should be denied to the adult believer. It recognises a state at least—that of justification—in both cases—in the adult by faith, in the infant without faith; it imposes the same obligations in both cases; and is a seal to the same blessing in both cases; and hence is due to one as much as the other. The infant does not receive in baptism, or by virtue of his baptism, that grace by which in responsible age it may "will and do of God's good pleasure," for this grace is a blessing which Christ has purchased by his vicarious death for every man, and is bestowed upon every man independently of the exercise of faith, or the reception of baptism, or any other consideration in man—an unconditional blessing universally bestowed, and is the basis of moral responsibility in every man under the covenant of grace. All infants indiscriminately receive this grace, by which they may be able to repent, believe, do good works, and perform all the conditions imposed under the covenant of grace when they are grown up; and the bestowment of this grace is formally recognised in every case of infant baptism. If the infusion of this grace, which is properly called initial or preventing grace, depended upon baptism, then an indispensable and important spiritual blessing would be connected with infant baptism; but the gift of this grace is antecedent to, and independent of baptism. "this is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into

the world"—and "the light" is "the life" of men. The possession of this grace places every man under responsibility to perform the conditions of the covenant of grace, which responsibility is formally and solemnly recognised in baptism; and hence every child, in the nature of things possessing it, should be baptized. The adult by faith, enters upon the discharge of these conditions, and hence should be baptized, that he may formally and sensibly set forth in the sight of God and man, that he has entered upon the discharge of his obligations up to this time neglected. Thus, the adult who has not yet believed, is under obligation to believe, and then to be baptized: no one will deny this: consequently, every adult who has neither believed nor been baptized, has up to this moment neglected both duties—the antecedent one of faith, and the subsequent one of baptism. By actual sin the adult forfeits the justification which he possessed in infancy, and faith is indispensable now to the recovery of justification; and hence, in the case of the adult, faith should precede baptism. When in a state of unconditional justification in infancy, he should have been baptized—it was omitted—subsequently by actual sin he forfeited this state of justification—he must now recover this state before he is entitled to baptism—this he does by faith —and hence faith in the adult not baptized in infancy should precede baptism. But the infant is already in a state of justification, and hence the antecedence of faith is not applicable in his case: baptism is a positive formal recognition of his present justification and future responsibility, should he live. In other words, none will deny, that baptism is a formal recognition in the adult believer of his present justification and responsibility during life. But the adult was as much under responsibility *before* he believed as he was *after* he believed—and hence, if infant baptism be struck out of the evangelical system, there is no formal recognition

of responsibility from infancy up to the time of faith. On the part of man, therefore, baptism is a federal act, that extends through all life, and hence it should be administered in infancy. On the part of God, it signifies his faithfulness in bestowing initial grace upon all children; and secondly, his promise to bestow additional and saving grace subsequently, in every case of repentance and faith: "for the promise is unto *you*, and to your children."

6. Baptism invests the infant with a right to all the privileges of the church and blessings of the atonement, should he sanction it in subsequent life by faith and obedience.

It is often objected, "that the child will derive no benefit from baptism when he is grown." On the same ground, because the adult will not improve his original title to salvation which he had in infancy, he ought not to have been saved had he died in infancy. The benefit, in a great measure, depends on the use which the adult makes of his infant baptism. Now every properly instructed adult, whether pardoned or unpardoned, believes that he was in a state of salvation while in infancy, and that consequently, had he died in infancy, he would have been saved. A benefit he derives from his original title is the impulse given to make his salvation sure. In a similar manner he confirms his title to infant baptism. While he feels that he had a title to salvation in infancy, he feels also, on the same ground, that he had as good a title to the outward sign and seal of that salvation: *both of which he now confirms by faith.* Thus, the adult believer baptized in infancy, presents himself to the church, and justly claims membership and the enjoyment of all the means of grace connected with the church. This benefit of infant baptism may be set forth in the following manner.

The infant obtains from his baptism as much benefit as

the freeborn child does from the civil constitution. If the freeborn child should die, still the conditions of his freedom were such as would have secured him the blessings of freedom had he lived. So the initiatory rite of baptism sets forth the title of the infant to all the blessings of salvation, should he live to enjoy them. As the freeborn child can lay claim, upon obedience to the civil compact, to all the blessings of freedom, so the child baptized in infancy can, in adult years, upon faith and obedience, lay claim to all the eternal blessings of the church of Christ, sealed and ratified unto him in infancy. Repeated baptism, in adult age, cannot strengthen this claim, and hence it may be dispensed with in every case.

7. It distinguishes the church from the world. How interesting, solemn, and impressive the administration of this ordinance in infancy at the altar of the sanctuary, in view of the devotional multitude, recognising the grace of God, the sanctity of religion, the sinfulness of man, and the separateness and distinctness of the church of Christ! Never was there a more beautiful and impressive ordinance, by which, at a glance, the whole redeeming plan of mercy is set forth, and the awful and extensive evil of sin presented. So impressive is this solemn sacrament sometimes, that unbelieving parents, while dedicating their children to God in baptism, are awakened to an effectual and practical sense of their alienation, guilt, and danger; and believing parents too, are excited to observe an increased diligence in educating their children for the duties of life, and qualifying them for the glories of heaven.

8. It imposes a salutary restraint, through all subsequent life, upon all who are properly instructed in the nature and design of baptism. Your children are now with you in the spiritual church of Christ: in a few years, it is most probable, they will go out of the spiritual church by trans-

gression. They need, therefore, every help to incline them to the service of God, to acknowledge his right to them, his care of them, their obligation to him, and their interest in him: all of which are most solemnly impressed on the mind by the conditions of baptism. To neglect the baptism of your children, therefore, at once cuts them off from the influences and incentives found in baptism, releases them in a measure from the obligations and restraints involved in the sacred rite, and thus so far not only promotes their departure from the spiritual church, but enhances the difficulty of their return, and leaves them impelled onward in the path of open rebellion and ruin. Circumcision under the Jewish law imposed obligation to keep the whole law, as Paul writes to the Galatians: "I testify to every man that is circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law. For circumcision *verily profiteth*, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision"—and baptism is substituted for circumcision, and implies the same obligations. Obedience to baptismal obligations secures all the blessings of the atonement, and this obedience is imposed in infant baptism, which the properly instructed infant recognises and promises to perform in subsequent life. Nor can the violation of baptismal obligations any more invalidate the propriety of infant baptism, than the transgression of the adult Jew can disannul the legality of infant circumcision.

9. The parents too, as already intimated, are stimulated more than they would otherwise be to train up their children for heaven. A sense of increased parental obligation is constantly recurring, and consequently more zealous efforts are made in the behalf of the children. Prayer is more earnest—vigilance more constant—solicitude more intense—and a sense of responsibility more solemn. The child, seeing the parents negligent in this matter, soon be-

comes negligent too: not being early taught his responsibility, he early feels more at liberty to submit to the impulses and propensities of an evil heart, and hence commits sin with less restraint. This is the infallible result. Exceptions, it is true, there are; but the general rule is in full force.

10. The relation between parent and child is hereby endeared and sanctified. Nature's voice is now heard as it would have expressed itself in Eden—and as it did express itself in the Jewish church. What! the parent stem in the church, and the beautiful *bud*, so frail, so tender, so delicate, that the slightest frost may blight it, hanging exposed and neglected over Zion's walls, above a wilderness world! The dam in the fold, comfortable, safe, and happy, and the feeble lamb out upon the mountains, without a fold and desolate! The parents in the church, and their offspring, bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh, a part of themselves, out of the church! Not so in civil society. Children are born citizens of the state in which their parents live. The connection is not less powerful in *grace* than in nature, nor association less intimate in the church than in the world. Under what a heavy sense of grief would the Jewish parents have mourned, had they been embraced in the church and their children excluded! It should deeply affect every parent in the Christian church, if his children are not formally associated with him.

11. Infant baptism is an institution of God, and hence, must have important spiritual benefits connected with it. And the least benefit attending it is the proper observance of it. The faithful performance of duty, in any case, is by divine law connected with reward. "In keeping the judgments of the Lord, there is great reward." God has pledged himself to bless the faithfulness of parents in discharging their parental obligations. "For I know him, (Abraham,)

that he will command his children and his household after him, and *they shall keep the way of the Lord*, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Gen. xviii. 19. And so in the case of Timothy. "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also." 2 Tim. i. 5. Abraham, Lois, and Eunice, by faith entered into covenant with God, the former receiving the seal under the Jewish, and the two latter receiving baptism under the Christian dispensation, and so dedicated formally and sacramentally their children to God under the dispensations respectively, and the benefit in each case is recorded. The language of philosophy and wisdom is, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old *he will not depart from it.*" Prov. xxii. 6.

12. God's proprietorship is hereby acknowledged. His right to infants can be sacramentally acknowledged in no other way.

13. God seems to exercise a peculiar regard for such as are dedicated to him by baptism in infancy. And no wonder, since it is the outward seal of the covenant of grace. They are most usually converted at an early age; and in many respects, they seem to share most largely in the blessings of the covenant.

14. Infant baptism is a privilege vouchsafed to parents. Why should so many parents decline this privilege? Is it not a privilege to you, parents, to have your children *unconditionally* associated with you in that church of which you form a part? To have them formally and solemnly embraced with you in the great covenant of redeeming mercy, and so united with you under the guardianship of the church of God? To educate them for heaven *in* the church rather than out of it? To consecrate them with yourselves at the

altar of God? That you are permitted to imitate the example of Hannah, offering up her precious boy Samuel to the service of the sanctuary, and of Joseph consecrating the infant Jesus in the temple of God? Are your church privileges inferior to those of Jewish parents in former days? Tell me, is it not a privilege to be permitted to call *God and his church* to help you in guiding your children safely to heaven? These are privileges—privileges to parents—privileges to children—and how much those baptized in infancy owe to the church, to their parents, and to the faithfulness of God, it will be impossible properly to estimate before we reach eternity. It remains for them, by God's grace, to continue and confirm their title to the "great salvation."

CHAPTER II.

THE DEDICATION OF CHILDREN IN BAPTISM A SOLEMN DUTY.

THE duty of dedicating children to God in baptism is founded upon fundamental principles.

1. The right of children to baptism is independent of parental relation and authority, since it is founded unconditionally upon the vicarious death of Christ, and they are specifically included in the promise or covenant of salvation; and hence parents are just as much bound formally to recognise their right to the seal of the covenant, as they are to train them up according to the conditions of the covenant, and the commands of God given with respect to their moral and religious education. Upon the same ground, the church has no right to withhold baptism from children. It is a

parental duty to dedicate the child to God, and baptism gives *visibility* to this act of dedication. Every parent is just as much bound to dedicate his children to God in baptism as he is to dedicate himself, for he has no better right to baptism than his children have. It is a duty then parents owe to their children.

2. It is a duty parents owe to God. It is the vicarious death of Christ that gives the child a right to the blessings of the covenant of grace, and it is the same death that gives Christ a right to the child. It is baptism that formally recognises these rights of Christ and the child—that signifies that these rights exist. Thus it is a duty that parents owe to God, as well as their children.

3. The very duties of parental instruction are implied in infant baptism. No one will deny that parental obligation properly to train up the children exists, and parents, in the baptism of their children, formally and solemnly pledge themselves to discharge this obligation. This obligation implies a godly life or example. The parents are to walk in the same holy path they would have their children pursue. A godly example is a silent monitor, more powerful than the most affecting appeals, or urgent entreaties, or prudent counsels. The parent is under obligation to submit to the authority of God, in keeping all his commandments, not only for his own sake, but for the sake of his children. All this is implied in the expression with respect to pious Abraham: "He will command his children and his household *after him.*" This obligation implies also faithful and earnest prayer for the children. Job prayed for his children. Prayer is intercourse with God, and it strengthens all the social principles, and enlivens in the highest degree every parental emotion and impulse, and so qualifies the parent the better to train up the children in the fear of God. Parental prayer avails with God, and the children are blessed

in a thousand ways by the answers he gives. Frequent and solemn prayer sets the example, and excites the impulse, in the case of the children. But parental example and prayer are not enough. Faithful religious instruction is required. Consider some of the results of pious parental instruction. It insensibly blends intellectual and moral instruction in the same process. This it does at an age when moral impressions are easily made upon every mental faculty, and moral principles are incorporated in the very texture of mind. Now the conscience possesses the tenderest sensibility, the will is submissive, the heart is confiding—there is no prejudice to combat—no pride of opinion to encounter—no artful sophistry to refute—no deep-laid policy to oppose—the evil propensities are yet dormant—evil passions are as yet asleep—the cares of the world, its business, its excitements, its pleasures, its ambition, its examples, make as yet no appeal to the attention—and released from the responsibilities and solicitudes of life, the young and opening mind may press its whole energies upon moral subjects. Besides, childhood is the best time in which to inculcate the principles of moral responsibility. The foundation of moral character is now laid in the *a priori* faculties of mind. Moral being, moral life, moral history, now begin in their primary elements—doctrines, conduct, enterprises, tastes, pleasures, associations, originate in the moral character now formed. The mind now receives the elements of its subsequent indefinite expansion, as a citizen of time, and a candidate for eternity. How he is to think, to act, to feel, as a subject of God's moral government—what are to be his moral sensibilities and tendencies—what are to be the elements of his whole moral being—is now to be determined. A more solemn or important duty cannot be conceived of than this which is devolved upon parents. The elements of future strength are wrapped up in the organized elements

contained within the limits of the unsightly coil of the acorn, and in their early evolution a child may snap the tender twig; but in the maturity of their development, the oak spreads its strong branches toward the heavens, and survives the shock of a thousand storms. The streamlet down the slope of the mountain may be diverted in its early progress from its original course by a tiny obstructing pebble, and so be lost in the depths of some murky, doleful cavern; but had it flowed on in the proper direction, it would have received the aid of countless streams in its progress, and rolled its congregated waters into the distant ocean—a noble river, the boundary of empires, and bearing upon its broad, deep bosom the navies and the commerce of the world. One of the results of pious parental instruction is, the mind at an early age is brought under the convicting and converting grace of God. Children so instructed know more of the precepts, invitations, promises, doctrines, warnings, and threatenings of the Bible, and hence have a livelier sense of sin and clearer views of pardon than many old persons who never enjoyed the privilege. The exalted piety and distinguished usefulness of Samuel, Timothy, Augustine, Hooker, Wesley, Dwight, Gardener, Doddridge, and a page of the noblest names among men, are to be ascribed to the early education of pious parents. From the same source the state has been furnished with some of its most illustrious champions and strongest pillars; the halls of learning, legislation, and jurisprudence, have been adorned with some of their brightest ornaments; and the no less honorable and respectable pursuits and toils of daily life are dignified with industry, morality, and integrity. The sanctions of religion alone can give stability to the institutions of a nation, and establish a national morality, and the purest national character. The whole solid framework of our government—our extensive facilities of trade and com-

merce—skill and success in agriculture—our free and noble institutions—our press—our growing population—our liberty —our dignity—our prosperity—and our endless prospects—are the fruits of the Christian religion. While civil legislators are enacting penal laws, and devising plans for prisons and dungeons and death, pious parents are applying all their energies to render these civil arrangements unnecessary—and not in vain, for scarcely any piously instructed in childhood have been condemned and disgraced by crime. Parental instruction of this nature is founded upon the eternal basis of divine truth, and corresponding results will follow. Let it not be supposed that this law of heaven was applicable only in the Old-Testament times. God has the same regard for children now, that he had and expressed then—children have the same interest in the atonement now, that they had then—they have the same need of instruction now, that they had then—and parents are under the same obligation now to train up their children properly, as they were then. The Psalmist says, God "established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children, which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children; that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." Ps. lxxviii. 5–7. And so in Deut. vi. 4–7; xi. 18–21. And so Paul exhorts parents, that they "bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. vi. 4. And so the apostle bears testimony to pious training in the case of Timothy: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that *from a child* thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. iii. 14, 15. Now all these duties,

namely, of a godly example, faithful, earnest, and constant prayer, and pious instruction, are involved essentially in parental relations; and parents solemnly and formally pledge themselves to discharge them, whenever they dedicate their children to God in baptism. An illustration is found in the case of Hannah and Samuel. She solemnly vowed that she would dedicate her child to God. Her prayer was heard and granted, and the child of prayer and promise formally consecrated to God, and duly trained, and none under the Old-Testament dispensation was more distinguished than Samuel for piety and usefulness

4. God has deeply implanted in parental hearts a strong affection for their children, and the tenderest anxiety for their welfare, and these pure social sentiments they solemnly pledge to their children in the formal service of baptism. The neglect of parental obligation is exceedingly displeasing to God, of which we have an impressive instance recorded in the case of Eli: "And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever, for the *iniquity which he knoweth;* because his sons made themselves vile, and *he restrained them not.* And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever." Let parents then remember that a most solemn trust is committed to them, involving a most solemn obligation, and this obligation is formally and solemnly acknowledged in the baptism of their children, and is to be discharged in the performance of the corresponding duties

CHAPTER III.

CONCLUSION.

A FEW remarks shall conclude this treatise.

1. The ordinance of baptism is to be explained to the children by the parents. Parents are under obligation to do this. "These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shall teach them *diligently to thy children*, and talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."[1] "The fathers to the children shall make known thy truth."[2] "He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children."[3] "When your children ask, What mean you by this service, then you shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians," &c.[4] A neglect of these duties was visited with bitter fruits upon the houses of Eli and David.

2. Much depends upon the faith of the parents and the church. "Only the Lord has a delight in their fathers to love them, *and he chose their seed after them.*" "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness to *children's children.*" "The generation of the upright shall be blessed."

[1] Deut. vi. 6, 7.
[2] Ps. xxxviii. 19.
[3] Ps. lxxviii. 5–7.
[4] Ex. xii. 26, 27.

Consider the faith of Hannah for Samuel—of the nobleman for his son at the point of death—of the woman of Canaan for her daughter vexed with a devil—and of Abraham for his own family. If faith can affect the spiritual interests of strangers, what may it confer upon the offspring! Under the influence of a strong and abiding faith, the children are to be trained up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" —to be often reminded of their dedication to God in baptism, and consequent solemn responsibilities and important privileges—and to be encouraged to exercise saving faith, without which all forms and ceremonies are dead and powerless.

3. The most solemn obligation is imposed upon parents, believing or unbelieving, to have their children baptized at the earliest convenience. The children of unbelieving, as well as believing parents, have an unconditional title to all the blessings of the everlasting covenant, and Christ also has a right to them. These rights can be formally acknowledged in no other way than by baptism. Nor can the apprehension of parents, that their children will not discharge their baptismal obligations, release them from attending to this duty which they owe to Christ and their children.

To neglect the baptism of the children, therefore, is in a very high degree improper, unwise, unkind, and unjust; and without question, under such circumstances, sin accrues to the parents, and much disadvantage and injury redound to the children in after life, and perhaps thereby to all eternity. A fearful import attends the omission or neglect of this duty. Safety only is in the proper observance of it.

4. Finally: this sacred ordinance should be administered in the church. The reasons for this are many and weighty. It greatly promotes the revival of the universal practice of infant baptism. It increases the number of attendants on divine service on the Sabbath-day. It suggests all the great truths of the gospel—revives a sense of parental obligation

—furnishes strong ground of appeal to the congregation, and many impressive motives to evangelical obedience—and excites a spirit of prayer for the subject of baptism, which could not be obtained in the drawing-room of the rich or the cottage of the poor. As Tertullian says, "We can with greater profit beg the divine grace upon the baptized person, when there is a number present in the *public* congregation." The church, from its solemn associations, is the most suitable place. It is true, whole households were baptized in the days of the apostles, and consequently infants were then baptized at home; but in the infancy of the church, and in view of the itinerant labors of the apostles, this practice was justified—there were no churches in the early days of the apostles. It is more convenient to baptize in the church than at home, since many can be baptized in the church on the same occasion. The design of baptism seems to demand that it be *public*, as in baptism the subject is consecrated to the service of God. The baptismal service of our church contemplates the administration of the ordinance in the church. In the direction, the terms, "the minister coming to the font;" "dearly beloved;" in the prayer, "the supplications of thy *congregation;*" preparatory to reading the gospel, "then shall the people stand up;" all clearly show that the Discipline designs that the baptism of children should be administered in the church. This view is further sustained by the baptismal service of the Church of England, of which ours is a modification. If from any *urgent* cause, baptism is to be administered at home, the Church of England has provided a particular office for it, which directs that the essential parts of the sacrament be administered immediately in private, but defers the other solemnities till the child can be brought into the church. The office is ordered to be said *at the font*, in the middle of the morning and evening prayer. The priest tells the godfathers and

godmothers, that they "*have brought the child hither to be baptized;*" which would have been absurd if it had been baptized at home. In the prayer, the priest says, "Grant that whosoever is *here* dedicated to thee by our office and ministry;" which would be absurd as before, if the word *here* did not refer to the church. And not until the practice of public baptism in the church was occasionally abandoned for private baptism at home, was the term "here" omitted in our discipline. Lastly, baptism initiates into, and associates with the church; and consequently, where is so suitable a place as the church? And what is more rational and consistent than the presence of the church, with whom, by baptism, the child is now united, and with whom he continues, till by actual transgression he forfeits his membership? Let the church restore the privilege, and observe the importance, of a general administration of this ordinance in the public congregation.

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